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**Indian Revolutionary Movement Abroad  
(1905-1921)**

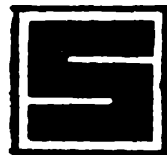
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(1905-1921)**

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*Indian Revolutionary Movement Abroad (1905-1921)*

**Tilak Raj Sareen**

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*dedicated  
to  
My Mother  
Late  
Smt Vidya Vati*



## Preface

One of the most prominent features of the Indian Independence movement during the first two decades of the 20th century was the prevalence of revolutionary conspiracies which aimed at the overthrow of the British Government in India by violent means. The movement was not confined within the boundaries of India only, but found its echoes also in distant lands. Gradually the movement became an integral part of the Indian freedom struggle. Here an attempt has been made to study this neglected aspect of India's struggle for freedom. To make it distinct from the extremist movement, it may be explained that throughout the period under study, the revolutionary movement has been taken to mean *that* particular movement which aimed at the overthrow of the British Government in India by violent means especially by forging an armed revolution in the country to achieve the objective with or without the help of external sources from abroad.

The present study would have remained incomplete but for the opportunity which I got in 1969 to go to England for training in Archives administration on a scholarship given by the British Council. During my stay in England for about one year, I made an extensive study of the records available at the Public Record Office, India Office Library and the British Museum, which together made it possible, for me to give here a systematic account of the activities of the Indian revolutionaries abroad.

I am extremely thankful to Mr Jeffrey Ede and the late Mr F.C. Monger for the kind help they gave me during my work at the Public Record Office, London. I should like to convey my thanks to Miss J. Lancaster and Mr M. Moir and other members of the staff of the India Office Library and Records, London, and the Director and Deputy Director, National Archives of India for their help and cooperation.

I am profoundly obliged to Shri V.C. Joshi, who took keen



interest in my work and was a constant source of guidance and encouragement throughout the period of my research in the subject.

I am also deeply indebted to Professor P.L. Mehra, Head of the Department of History, Panjab University, for his help and encouragement. My wife Dr Anuradha Sareen took great pains in going through the manuscript and making valuable suggestions for which I am thankful to her.

New Delhi  
August, 1977.

*T.R. Sareen*

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## Introduction

The story of resistance to British rule virtually starts with the British conquest of India.<sup>1</sup> The resistance took different forms at different stages of British expansion, but by the first-half of the 19th century two distinct forms were clearly visible. One was the old form according to which both Hindu and Muslim rulers regarded the British as usurping foreigners and sincerely believed that they should be swept off the face of India by violent means. The other was the new and improved form of resistance inculcated by English education and Western ideas, according to which constitutional self-government was to be ultimately achieved by a slow process under the protection of the British.<sup>2</sup> The first form of resistance reached its climax with the revolt of 1857 when alongwith the erstwhile Indian rulers—Hindus and Muslims—the people in few areas also made a heroic effort to overthrow the British Government. Like the earlier violent efforts the revolt was a failure. The resistance during these years was mostly feudal in character and isolated in its nature.

For the next fifty years, save for the sporadic efforts of the Kukas and the Wahabis, the violent form of resistance remained dormant, while the second gained popularity under slightly different circumstances. In the post-1858 period, tremendous changes took place in the intellectual, economic and social conditions of the people. The period was particularly marked by the growth of national sentiments. The factors which were responsible for this change were to a large extent brought into operation by the British Raj itself, which held together the vast subcontinent and ensured its peace and security. The spread of the English pattern of education and the impact of Western ideas of liberty, equality and nationalism provided the motive force for the growth of the national movement. Under the impact of the Western ideas and English education the orthodox and tradition-bound Indian society underwent what is generally

designated as a revolutionary change.<sup>2</sup> Armed resistance was replaced by political organisations and constitutional agitation led by the new English-educated class. At the same time the increasing influence of the press and the expansion of the railway and communication systems broke down the barriers which separated different communities and castes in India and facilitated their union for a common purpose. The new educated class had an implicit faith in the British sense of justice and fondly hoped that as soon as they proved themselves fit, they would be entrusted with a larger share in the administration of their own country. However, with passing of years they felt disappointed and disillusioned as they found that the despotic rule of an alien power gave them no opportunities and denied them their legitimate role in the regeneration of the national life.

If, on the one hand, the post-1858 period was responsible for the growth of the spirit of national consciousness among the people, it also brought a change in the British attitude towards the Indians. The memories of 1857 had made the British bureaucracy socially arrogant and the administration was both unsympathetic and unresponsive. The economic policy of the Government proved more and more ruinous to the people. There was a constant drain of wealth from the country. But the most galling feature of the foreign rule which became apparent during this period was the glaring inequality between the rulers and the ruled. The social arrogance of the Englishmen and their rude behaviour towards the Indians were no less unpleasant to them than the openly declared policy of the Raj to keep India in perpetual bondage. The new educated class was sorely touched by this treatment and began to agitate for employment in higher services and for the introduction of representative institutions. These demands were voiced through the political associations that grew up in the various provinces in the second-half of the 19th century.

The attempts at organised political life reached their culmination in the formation of the Indian National Congress in 1885. In its early years the Congress aimed at good Government, wider employment of Indians in higher public offices and the introduction of representative institutions. The leaders of

the Congress wanted to achieve these objectives by constitutional agitation. For the next twenty years the Congress held its annual meetings repeatedly passing resolutions demanding a larger share in the Government and the administration of the country. Unfortunately the resolutions of the Congress made little impact on the Government; the demand for reforms was hardly taken seriously by the Government. But nonetheless, the educative value of the work done by the Congress was significant. The number of the persons taking interest in public affairs was growing and public opinion was being built up in the country on questions of national importance. The actions of the Government were now being watched closely, and during the first five years of the 20th century these aroused a storm of opposition.<sup>3</sup> As a matter of fact a new life began to pulsate in the hearts of the people and the national movement took a new turn.

Towards the closing years of the 19th century dissatisfaction with the rate of progress achieved or attempted by the Congress began to grow and many Indians started favouring the adoption of measures which it was hoped would produce more speedy results. The new leaders were permeated with a deep religious spirit. They were men of great courage and of self-sacrificing independent spirit, dominated by the love of their country and an intense dislike of the foreign rule. Unlike the older leaders of the Congress, they had no faith in the generosity of the British and in the efficacy of the methods of 'political mendicancy'.

Various factors contributed towards the emergence of this change in the thinking of the people. The leaders of the Congress had hoped to achieve economic, political and educational progress in the country with British help, but no concrete reforms were introduced and no improvements were made. Bureaucracy continued as ever, to be adamant and irresponsible. This frustrated the hopes of the educated Indians, resulting in a feeling of helplessness and bitterness. Moreover, it further intensified disaffection, strengthened patriotic impulses and bred a spirit of revolt.<sup>4</sup>

At the same time the various acts of blazing indiscriminate during the viceroyalty of Lord Curzon (1899-1905) gave

a further fillip to the national movement. In the words of Lajpat Rai the Indian national movement might have continued on its placid and humdrum course until Curzon's ridicule of the movement convinced the people that the political methods of the Congress were quite useless to bring them any relief against the despotism that trampled upon all their rights and sensibilities.<sup>5</sup> While the educated classes were still seething with discontent over the Universities Act and the Official Secrets Act, the administration announced the partition of Bengal. From the time the scheme of partition was suggested, strong and persistent opposition had been voiced from the press and the platform. The decision to partition Bengal in the face of strong opposition appeared to the politically conscious people not merely as a deliberate affront, but also as a blatant attempt to weaken the national movement by rendering asunder the province which had begun to assume its leadership. Accordingly a widespread agitation which in its sheer intensity constituted a new phenomenon in Indian politics, was set on foot for the reversal of the partition.<sup>6</sup>

In the wake of the partition of Bengal came the *Swadeshi* and boycott movement which stirred the political and national consciousness of the people to a degree unknown before. At first the boycott of British goods and other elements of *Swadeshi* movement made a strong appeal to the people, but when these proved ineffective in achieving the desired objects, a steadily increasing number of youngmen turned to terrorist methods as the only possible means to attain the goal.<sup>7</sup>

The growth of a militant spirit amongst the youngmen received a fillip from the victory of Japan over Russia which 'thrilled the entire orient world with new hope and ambition' and proved to be 'the most portent sort of stimulus to Indian nationalism.'<sup>8</sup> 'Japan's success,' wrote D. Petrie, the Director, Criminal Intelligence, 'inspired India to the realization that it would be only a matter of time when her people would also be able to hold their own as free people in their own country.' The success of Japan against Russia had demonstrated that an Asiatic nation could by organisation and training, defeat one of the greatest military nations of Europe. Under its impact various associations for the promotion of physical culture

sprang up, especially in Bengal, designed to remove the reproach that Bengalis were a non-marital and *effete* people. Exhortations were addressed to the people and particularly the youth of the country in the name of *Kali*, the goddess of strength and in the name of *Shivaji*, to unite and retaliate against the foreign Government.<sup>9</sup> In Petrie's estimate it was only after the Russo-Japanese war that the revolutionary ideal which had been virtually dormant since 1857, was revived and the Indians began their activities with bombs, revolvers and organised conspiracies to overthrow the British rule.<sup>10</sup>

There were some other factors which contributed to the growth of the new spirit. Under the influence of the powerful preachings of the religious reformers like Swami Dayanand, Swami Vivekanand and Mrs Annie Besant, and the work that was done by various religious and other associations like the Arya Samaj, the Rama Krishna Mission, the Theosophical Society and the Servants of India Society, people also became conscious of their political rights and felt pride in their ancient heritage.

The emergence of this new trend in Indian politics produced two groups of political leaders who followed different methods as compared with those of the Congress. These groups were designated by the Government as nationalists or extremists and revolutionaries or terrorists. Both the groups had more or less similar aims and the difference was that of methods employed by them. The extremists believed in political agitation and national reconstruction through the boycott of British goods and British institutions. After having read the histories of the French Revolution, the Italian Renaissance and the American independence, the revolutionaries were convinced about the efficacy of Western revolutionary methods. Their mind was influenced by the heroic attempts of Russian anarchists and the Irish Sinn Finners. Four prominent leaders of the first group, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Lala Lajpat Rai, Bipin Chandra Pal and Aurobindo Ghosh, defined its creed, articulated its aspiration and conducted its operations. They raised the standard of revolt against the mendicant policy of the Congress and preached the cult of self-help and self-reliance throughout India. The writings and speeches of these men infused a new spirit of



boldness and self-confidence among the people. But by and large like the moderate leaders of the Indian National Congress, they also wanted what is termed as self-government under the British. Their imagination—active or dormant—never thought of independent India controlled by its own people.

On the other hand, the revolutionary movement grew under the leadership of Barindra Kumar Ghosh and Bhupendra Nath Datta, and a number of secret revolutionary societies were formed throughout the length and breadth of Bengal. From Bengal the revolutionary movement began to spread to other provinces and even found its echo in foreign lands. The revolutionaries had a following which comprised mostly educated youngmen who believed fanatically that the constitutional methods for achieving concessions—political, social or economic—from the British Government, were ineffective and the only way to accomplish anything was to adopt force or violent means 'such as had been adopted or practised in Russia and other European countries'.<sup>11</sup> They made no secret of their aspirations and the way in which they wanted to secure their fulfilment. They believed in the overthrow of the British Government by an armed revolt if and when practicable. The apparent signs of this movement were visible in the activities of its leaders and their disciples in the schools, in religious missions, in political *akharas*, in public meetings and more especially in the press. The newspapers *Yugantar* and *Bande Mataram* frankly advocated the overthrow of the British Government by violent means. They were the people who raised the cry of Independent National Government for India, and the recruits for the movement were primarily from the lower middle class young student communities. There was to be no compromise between their demand and the Government policy of appeasement which was even applauded by the extremist leaders.

The Government of India was taken by surprise at the rapid growth of revolutionary activities and tried to control the situation by a number of repressive measures, e.g., Prevention of Seditious Meetings Act, Explosive Substances Act, and the Newspapers (Incitement to Offences) Act. This was followed by the Indian Criminal Law Amendment Act and the Indian Press

Act. However, instead of giving a mortal blow to the revolutionary activities these repressive acts rather helped in the growth of the revolutionary ideas and brought to surface two new elements in the Indian national movement. Firstly, on account of these repressive measures, most of the revolutionary societies went underground and their members became more cautious and secretive about their activities. Secondly, it also forced a number of revolutionaries to escape to foreign countries where they were able to carry on their anti-British activities more openly. Following in the footsteps of the early leaders of the Indian National Congress who attached great importance to their work in England, a few Indians holding extreme views established an anti-British centre in London and Paris in 1905. After their escape from India, the Indian revolutionaries joined these centres and gradually expanded their activities to other places. The British despotic rule which suppressed the revolutionary movement in India was largely responsible for the establishment of anti-British centres in England, France and the United States

Even the Government of India realised that as a result of these repressive measures the Indian revolutionaries left the country and selected London and other places both as a base from which to distribute highly inflammable journals and pamphlets and as convenient centres whence they could preach revolutionary ideas not only to their immediate audience consisting, for the most part, of Indian students and Indian residents but also to the wider circle in India which could then be reached by means of revolutionary literature targeted from abroad.<sup>12</sup> While under the weight of repressive measures, the revolutionary movement slackened inside the country, it made rapid strides in foreign lands, where it received ardent support from Indian residents abroad. Even in India the movement was never static; on the contrary, it continued to widen its sphere of influence and to swell the number of its adherents.

The main aim of Indian revolutionaries abroad was to establish useful international contacts, interpret India's aspiration and gain help and sympathy for India's fight for freedom.<sup>13</sup> In the free atmosphere of the western countries and the encouragement and sympathy which the Indian revolutionaries

received from the Irish, the Egyptian and the Russian revolutionaries, the movement grew rapidly. Under the patriotic zeal and tireless efforts of Shyamaji Krishna Varma, V D. Savarkar, Har Dayal, Tarak Nath Dass, Virendranath Chattopadhyaya, Barkatullah and others, anti-British centres were established in London, Paris, New York, Japan, Berlin, etc. By the beginning of the first World War, the Indian revolutionaries had expanded their activities to almost every country of the world. In their aim of overthrowing the British Government in India by an armed uprising they did not shirk from joining hands with Germany during the war and with the Soviet Union after it was over.

The efforts of the Indian revolutionaries to promote the cause of Indian independence from abroad occupies a unique place in the history of India's struggle for freedom. But this aspect of Indian freedom movement has not received sufficient attention from the historians. It is only in recent years that some attempts have been made to study the activities of the Indian revolutionaries abroad and a few books dealing mainly with the activities of the Indians in the United States have been published.<sup>11</sup> The reason that no comprehensive study of this phase of Indian freedom movement has been undertaken may be attributed to the fact that till recently the records at the National Archives, Public Record Office or other places were not accessible to research.

The present study, by no means exhaustive, attempts at giving a systematic account of the activities of the Indian revolutionaries abroad based on original sources. These activities developed from a modest beginning in 1905 into what Spellman has described as an 'international conspiracy' during the first World War.

The first four chapters deal mainly with the early activities of the Indian revolutionaries in England, Paris and the United States till the formation of the Ghadr Party by Har Dayal and the efforts made by them without the help of any external power to overthrow the British Government in India during the winter of 1915. In Chapters V to VII, an attempt has been made to narrate the activities of the Indian revolutionaries after they had joined hands with the German Government for bringing

about a revolution in India and the various schemes which were formulated in this connection for the shipment of arms, ammunition, etc. Chapter VIII deals with the termination of the alliance of the Indian revolutionaries with Germany and their prosecution by the US Government at San Francisco. Chapter IX enumerates the unsuccessful efforts of the Indian revolutionaries to procure help from the Soviet Union in their fight against the British Government. This was the last desperate attempt made by them before the break-up of their organization, the study of which is narrated in the concluding chapter.

The task of presenting the activities of the Indian revolutionaries abroad in its true perspective is not easy. The material is vast, but it is also one-sided and subjective. The records of the British Intelligence though quite informative cannot be taken on their face value and very often they do not provide the factual picture of the incidents and plans of the Indian revolutionaries. The researcher's job becomes more difficult when it is realised that there are very few records left by the Indian revolutionaries themselves. However, the relevant resources, available in India as well as abroad, have been fully utilised for this study. The official records in the National Archives of India, New Delhi, Public Records Office, and India Office Library and Records, London, form the main sources of information. But much more informative and reliable are the records of the US Department of Justice and the German Foreign Office.

Alongwith the narration of the activities in various countries, an effort has also been made to analyse the policies and attitudes of different foreign powers towards the Indian revolutionary movement. For the study of this aspect, the records of the British Foreign Office and the Diplomatic Papers are indispensable. The study of these records give us an insight into the significance which the British attached to the activities of the Indian revolutionaries in the United States, Japan and Germany and how they tried frantically through diplomatic channels to suppress these activities and what a tough time the British representatives had to convince the authorities in those countries about the urgency of controlling these activities which were damaging the prestige of the British Empire.

Besides the official records, corroborative evidence on the activities of the revolutionaries was collected from the private papers of the various Viceroys and Secretaries of State for India and the Indian revolutionaries.

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## The Beginnings of the Movement in U.K.

### **Shyamaji Krishna Varma and the Home Rule Society**

Though seemingly paradoxical, the first distinct echoes of the Indian revolutionary activity abroad resounded in the metropolis of the British Empire itself. Its explanation is not far to seek. Britain had, of course, been a place of refuge for revolutionaries from all over the world. Its democratic traditions and free atmosphere were quite conducive to the growth of such movements.

From the last decade of the 19th century there had existed in England, a British Committee of the Indian National Congress to which a number of Britishers themselves had lent their support. But this was a tame organisation. Despite two decades of sustained though vain patriotic toil, it could not make its presence felt. Presumably its leaders and followers preferred to adhere to its fundamental principles of loyalty to the Empire and to constitutional methods. Voices had, doubtless, been raised against what was then looked upon as the spineless propaganda of the Congress. But these protests remained for the most part ineffective until a British radical leader like Hyndman came forward and denounced the methods used by the Congress leaders to appeal to the British public opinion. Men like Dadabhai Naoroji had taken objection to it. But Hyndman in no uncertain terms reminded Indian leaders that unless and until the Congress adopted more forceful methods, it could achieve nothing. Hyndman's example in fact served as

an immediate incentive to the formation of revolutionary activity in England.

Shyamaji Krishna Varma, who had been closely watching the activities of the Congress for quite some time took the cue from Hyndman and embarked upon the course from which he never deviated. It was on Hyndman's suggestion that the Indian Home Rule Society was established in England and through its organ, *The Indian Sociologist*, it started denouncing the Congress demand of self-government under the British empire as idle and foolish. Not satisfied with what the leaders of the Congress had been doing, Shyamaji soon emerged as an advocate of a national form of Government which should have nothing to do with the Empire. This difference between the viewpoints of the two streams of Indian political organisations in England brought about a fundamental change in the thinking of the people in India and abroad, its reaction being equally expressed in the concern among British official circles. It must, however, be recognised that it was the British tradition of liberty that provided ground and freedom for revolutionary operations in the very heart of imperial headquarters. The credit for the movement's propagation abroad goes largely to Shyamaji Krishna Varma (1857-1930). Born in a poor family in Mandavi in the Cutch State, he became one of the foremost leaders of the Indian revolutionary movement. During the critical years of 1905-14, he carried on a vigorous propaganda for India's freedom from London, Paris and Geneva. A great Sanskrit scholar, Shyamaji was a man of sterling character. He was invited by Monier Williams, the then Boden Professor of Sanskrit in the University of Oxford, to work as his assistant. In India, Shyamaji had been actively associated with Swami Dayanand, the founder of the Arya Samaj, and Colonel Olcott of the Theosophical movement. After graduation from Oxford he was called to the Bar at the Inner Temple.

Shyamaji came back to India in 1884. From 1885 to 1897 he served in a number of Indian princely states. While as *Diwan* in Junagadh he came in clash with the then British Resident and was dismissed from state service. Officially the Resident recorded that Shyamaji's dismissal was on account of 'gross misconduct' but privately, he informed the Foreign

Department of the Government of India that Shyamaji was a dangerous person and further suggested that 'all States and all Residents should be warned against him.' The real reason for the expulsion of Shyamaji appears to have been that in his capacity as *Diwan* he ignored the Political Agent and conducted the affairs of the State in an independent way.<sup>1</sup> The defiant attitude of the *Diwan* of an Indian State could hardly be tolerated by the British Government of India, who had always regarded not only the princes but all their functionaries as subservient to the Resident or the Political Agent. Shyamaji after having imbibed the ideas of freedom and democracy during his stay in England could not be a patient party to the interference of the Political Agent in the affairs of the state. After his dismissal from Junagadh, Shyamaji served for a brief period in Udaipur State as a member of the State Council. In 1897 he left for England having no taste 'to live a life of constant pin-pricks or servility to foreign masters.'<sup>2</sup>

Perhaps Shyamaji had an inkling that the Government of India had not reacted favourably to his participation in the activities of the Arya Samaj and the Theosophical Society. The final break came when the authorities in India began the ruthless prosecution of Natu brothers in connection with the murder of Rand, the Plague Commissioner of Patna, and he decided to settle in England. J. C. Ker, Personal Assistant to the Director of Criminal Intelligence, suspected that Shyamaji's departure was not unconnected with the arrest, particularly the deportation under Regulation III of 1818, of the Natu brothers.<sup>3</sup> Shyamaji, according to government authorities, also believed that 'no one was safe from oppression of the governing classes in India.'<sup>4</sup>

From the time Shyamaji left India, the political situation in India underwent a considerable change. Under the bold leadership of Tilak, B.C. Pal and Lajpat Rai, the educated Indians now came out with the slogans of *Swadeshi* and *Swaraj*. The agitation was not confined mainly to writings and speeches, but an era of bombs and violence against the British officials dawned on the Indian political scene.

It was about this time that Shyamaji, who had been closely watching the developments in India following his departure



decided to throw in his lot with the vanguard of Indian nationalism. In December 1904, in a letter to Sir William Wedderburn, he suggested the scheme of Herbert Spencer Indian Fellowship and requested him to present it at the forthcoming annual session of the Indian National Congress at Bombay. The letter from Shyamaji contained a severe denunciation of the Indian government. Wedderburn politely refused to read it publicly in the Congress session taking into consideration the basic aim of the Congress to maintain its image of loyalty and moderation in the eyes of the Government.<sup>5</sup> 'With this letter', writes his biographer, 'Shyamaji made his debut on the stage of Indian politics and his political views came to the notice of the authorities in India.'<sup>6</sup>

Finding the Congress unwilling to give publicity to his political views, Shyamaji launched in January 1905 the publication of his own paper, the *Indian Sociologist*. The apparent reason given by Shyamaji for starting the paper was that a genuine Indian interpreter of the political relations between India and England was needed in the United Kingdom and that it could show on behalf of India 'how Indians really fared and felt under British rule.'<sup>7</sup> Since there was no other organ through which the Indians could ventilate their political aspirations, Shyamaji wanted to plead the cause of India and her unrepresented millions before the bar of public opinion in England and Ireland through the medium of the *Indian Sociologist*.

The very first issue of the journal published the scheme of Herbert Spencer Indian Fellowship which he had mentioned previously in his letter to Wedderburn. The fellowship scheme was quite new and bold in its conception. It aimed at encouraging Indian graduates to complete their education in England with a view to adopting independent professions. The scheme, however, envisaged the training of those young men for the nationalist cause. A graduate holding one of these fellowships was not expected to 'accept any post, office, emoluments or service under the British government after his return to India'; instead he was honour-bound to devote his life to the cause of India's independence. With the object of creating a class of patriotic youngmen who could take an active part in the

nationalist movement, Shyamaji sponsored another scheme of six lectureships, of Rs 1,000 each, for enabling authors, journalists and other qualified Indians to visit Europe, America and other countries so as to equip themselves efficiently for spreading among the people of India the concept and purpose of freedom and national unity.<sup>8</sup>

Shyamaji gradually expanded the activities in England. On the suggestion and active cooperation of Hyndman<sup>9</sup> and other Irish friends, he founded in February 1905, the Indian Home Rule Society.<sup>10</sup> The object of the Society was to secure home rule for India by mobilising through propaganda the support of the public in England and to achieve this objective by all practical means.<sup>11</sup> With the establishment of the Home Rule Society and the publication of the *Indian Sociologist* started Shyamaji's new career as a full-fledged political propagandist, and organiser of a movement abroad for the attainment of complete independence by the people of India.<sup>12</sup>

Shortly after, Shyamaji opened the India House at 65 Cromwell Avenue, Highgate, London, which provided cheap accommodation for students holding fellowships and also served as a meeting place for the Indians then living in the city. The opening ceremony of this centre was performed by H.M. Hyndman, and others who participated in the function were Dada-bhai Naoroji, Madame Cama, Swinny of the *Posivists Review*, Harry Quelch (Editor of *Justice*), and many Irish nationalist leaders. Lajpat Rai also made a speech as one of the first residents of the India House, which in subsequent years became 'the most dangerous organisation outside India'<sup>13</sup> and the headquarters in England of the Indian revolutionary movement.

The Home Rule movement of Shyamaji while it received encouragement from Lajpat Rai, Naoroji, Tilak and Pal, was, however, disapproved by Gokhale, Banerjea, Wedderburn and Hume. Gokhale regarded the views of Shyamaji as altogether crude, such 'as of an unpractical man.'<sup>14</sup> On the other hand, Tilak sent him a congratulatory telegram applauding his 'self-sacrificing spirit' in which the latter had started these institutions and expected that the 'freer atmosphere of England' would give him a wider scope for the propagation of the nationalist ideas amongst the Indian people.<sup>15</sup> F.H.O' Donnel, President

of the National Democratic League, also sent a telegram wishing success to the movement.<sup>16</sup>

Shyamaji fully utilised the 'free atmosphere' of England for propagating his views. In the initial stages, the movement was anti-Congress and anti-British. Shyamaji, however, subsequently made an implicit reference in his speeches as to the methods he wanted to pursue for the emancipation of his country from the British rule. In his view the parliamentary representation was a failure and the only effective way to demand justice was by force, if necessary. He even warned the leaders of the Indian National Congress to desist from wasting the resources of India for the admission of a few Indians into the British Parliament. He believed that Indians could obtain independence by simply refusing to help their foreign masters and without incurring the evils of violent revolution.<sup>17</sup>

Shyamaji was convinced that the salvation of India depended on Indians themselves. His views became more clear when he started exposing ruthlessly the fruitless activities of the Indian National Congress and the pernicious system of Government then prevailing in India. In the *Indian Sociologist* Shyamaji explained forcefully the possible ways of putting an end to the system of Government prevalent in India. He wrote that either the British should withdraw from India voluntarily, or else the people should make a successful effort to throw off the foreign yoke, or failing that the British rule in India could be brought to an end by the intervention of some foreign power.<sup>18</sup>

Soon, however, the last alternative was discarded by him. Since there was no possibility of the voluntary withdrawal of the British from India, as they were treating the country as 'a preserve or happy hunting ground for the benefit of British civil and military services and British capitalists' he advocated that the only other course left for the Indians to throw off the foreign yoke was by non-cooperating with the British government.<sup>19</sup>

Shyamaji was a man of clear political thinking. While he preached the boycott of the British government, he also discussed the form of administration which Indians must elect to replace it. He placed before the people three practical propositions which he thought were open to them. First, if they

were happy with the present system they should meekly go on tolerating the despotic form of government under which they can have no real voice of their own. Secondly, they should faithfully echo the demand of the Indian National Congress and struggle for the attainment of self-government as enjoyed by the British colonies under the paramountcy of Britain. The third alternative available to the people in his view was the establishment of an absolutely free and independent form of National Government.<sup>20</sup>

Shyamaji completely ruled out the first alternative as obnoxious to all patriotic minded Indians. He proved by arguments that the second choice was also absurd as it could not be expected of the British Government to voluntarily grant freedom. He therefore openly favoured the third proposition as worthy of achievement by whatever means possible. Shyamaji's views thus stood in sharp contrast to the policy of the Congress and the reactionary British and Indian leadership in that party.<sup>21</sup>

However, Shyamaji's scheme of fellowships and lecturerships was quite successful as it brought within the orbit of the movement a number of young and energetic individuals from India. The first batch of five students sailed from India in 1905, and the second batch came in 1906. Among those selected were three Muslims. The India Office became suddenly apprehensive of the danger implicit in Shyamaji's Scheme of fellowships and immediately instructed the Government of India to make a thorough enquiry into the antecedents of the holders of the fellowships.<sup>22</sup> The enquiries revealed that the majority of the selected candidates belonged to the extremist party in India, or were recommended by extremist leaders.<sup>23</sup>

Under the patriotic leadership of Shyamaji the Home Rule movement in England gained in popularity and strength and within a year it had a membership of 119. Besides Shyamaji's propaganda campaign, the other reasons for the growth of political consciousness among the Indian students, was the atmosphere of free thinking in England itself. Party politics was free for all, and it formed a common subject of conversation among the revolutionaries of different countries who had then taken an asylum in that country, especially those from

Ireland, Egypt, Persia and Russia. Living in such conditions, it was not expected of the young students to resist the ideas by which they were surrounded,<sup>24</sup> and they readily responded to the clarion call of Shyamaji. A branch of the society was also established in Paris under the direction of S.R. Rana and B H. Godrej<sup>25</sup>

The new voice raised by Shyamaji in London did not go unheard in India. While the Anglo-Indian press denounced him as a 'mischief-monger', the Congress press assumed an attitude of cold indifference. Surprisingly, among the pro-Government Anglo-Indian newspapers there was some frank appreciation of his activities and views. The *Pioneer* while supporting Shyamaji commented that he was not 'bound to be loyal to a Government of foreigners if his honest convictions led him in another direction' adding further that Shyamaji was at least reasonably frank about the fact that he was 'employing his energies and purse in attempting to shake the foundation of the British Government.' The main idea propagated by Shyamaji and his followers through their political activities was that the British presence in India was a great curse and therefore it should be dissolved by force should the remedy of force come within the sphere of practical politics.<sup>26</sup> Similarly the *Times of India* which gave the appellation of the 'Third Party' to the followers of Home Rule movement, which though still comparatively small was growing rapidly, was of the view that this party had a definite plan of

**what it wants. Whatever its faults, it is logical enough from its own point of view, and states the issue in clear and unmistakable fashion. It laughs at the idea of self-Government on the colonial basis, which it frankly admits England could never be expected to grant to India. It jeers at the aspiration of the present Congress leaders. It insists that the only remedy which will satisfy its desires is the establishment of an absolutely free and independent form of National Government without the paramountcy of England.**<sup>27</sup>

In its initial stages, Shyamaji had advocated in his propaganda the efficacy of the passive resistance as a potent force

for the attainment of a free and independent form of government, but when the Government of India embarked on a policy of ruthless suppression of the national movement in India, Shyamaji openly propagated the use of force to achieve the object. 'The possibility of a peaceful revolution' Shyamaji wrote, was now : 'very remote seeing that England is bent upon destroying every vestige of political freedom in India.' Thus, he envisaged that a struggle was inevitable of which there could be but one result, namely, the overthrow of the oppressive alien Government in India by violent means,<sup>28</sup> and that the only effective way which could bring the 'English Government to its senses' was the Russian methods.<sup>29</sup>

Shyamaji's efforts were not confined to the training of Indian youngmen in England, and propaganda through the *Indian Sociologist*. He enlarged the scope of his activities and set up an organisation of political missionaries in India. He offered 10,000 rupees for the establishment of this organisation which was named '*Deshbhakta Samaj* or Society of Political Missionaries'. The move was taken by Shyamaji on the recommendation of Pal and Tilak.<sup>30</sup> Tilak even suggested that the best way of spending the money would be to distribute the amount over three years and to arrange for a lecturing tour each year in each province. With a view to elucidating the principles of 'the new school of political thought in India.'<sup>31</sup> Pal was selected as the first political missionary under the scheme, but he could not fulfil the assignment.<sup>32</sup> After the arrest of Pal, the scheme could not be implemented in India. In England the revolutionary preachings of Shyamaji and his associates came under the scathing analysis of the authorities. In July 1907, J.D. Rees, a Member of Parliament, drew the attention of the Secretary of State for India in the House of Commons to the activities of Shyamaji who was endeavouring to 'debauch the loyal subjects of His Majesty'. Rees suggested that the public prosecutor might be ordered to proceed against Shyamaji with a view to 'his ultimate expulsion as an undesirable alien' from England. The Secretary of State for India, however, did not accept Rees' suggestion, but Shyamaji after having become 'undesirable and dangerous' in the eyes of the British authorities thought it prudent to leave England in

August 1907,<sup>33</sup> for settling in Paris. Under British law no action could be taken against Shyamaji, but the Government of India, however, issued a notification in September 1907 prohibiting the entry of the *Indian Sociologist* into India. Despite the ban on its entry, copies continued to reach India in covers which were changed from time to time so as to escape detection in the post office.

It was through this weekly paper, subtitled 'an organ of freedom and political, social and religious reform', that Shyamaji pleaded for full self-government for India which differed from the Congress aim of securing more seats in the Councils and more posts in Government service. Similarly, Shyamaji's radical methods of self-help which included the most stringent boycott and 'passive resistance' and even force if possible stood in sharp contrast with the Congress tradition of begging and praying for concessions.<sup>34</sup>

In the short span of two years Shyamaji succeeded not only in initiating a powerful anti-British movement abroad, but also established close links with the extremists in India. Shyamaji became a pivot around which all revolutionary elements abroad revolved. That his propaganda exercised a profound influence on the extremist movement in India was recognised even by the Government of India, who found much to their annoyance that Shyamaji's political views were 'avowedly very extreme and anti-British' and his 'influence over those in India who held similar views was very considerable.'<sup>35</sup>

H.H. Risley, the Home Secretary, confirmed that the operations of the professional sedition-mongers were far more widespread, far better organised and far more advanced than those of the professional criminals, and after the success of the propaganda of Shyamaji the range of the activities of the Indian revolutionaries encompassed 'England, America and Paris' and they fully shared his political creed that political killing was no murder.

There is no denying the fact that before Shyamaji left for Paris, the anti-British movement had spread to different parts of the world and was linked with the secret and revolutionary groups in India.<sup>36</sup>

Besides this, Shyamaji, during his stay in England, obtained

without strings the sympathy and close cooperation of the Irish and Egyptian nationalists in his fight against the British. Shyamaji's condemnation of the British rule in India and his demand for full political freedom from foreign rule won him the admiration and respect of the socialists and other patriotic workers in England.<sup>37</sup> He was the first of the most prominent Indian leaders to publicly demand absolute Independence and declared fearlessly that as nothing short of this ideal could be the political aim of a nation, especially of India, she could never come to her own, never win political freedom without embarking on a relentless war, having recourse to force.<sup>38</sup>

It is true that Shyamaji's political ideas which he widely propagated could not bring any change in the thinking of the men like Gokhale and other moderate leaders, but it gave a new turn to the Indian revolutionary movement. The dedicated band of workers which Shyamaji trained were active both in India and abroad.

### **The assassination of Sir Curzon Wyllie**

After the departure of Shyamaji for Paris, the party, then mainly composed of youngmen, rapidly increased in numbers and boldness.<sup>39</sup> To such men the question of achieving Home Rule by pacific means became a discarded and meaningless cry especially when the movement came under the guidance and leadership of Vinayak Damodar Savarkar. (1883-1966)

Since coming to London in June 1906, Savarkar had not taken any prominent part in the movement. He was apparently busy preparing for his examination and writing a biography of Mazzini. Brought up under the new extremist school of politics in India, Savarkar held strong anti-British views and played an active role in the revolutionary movement in India and was the founder of the *Abhinava Bharat Society*. After having translated the *Autobiography of Joseph Mazzini* into Marathi, Savarkar had lost faith in "mendicant methods of politics" and was firmly of the opinion that independence and self-government were not to be acquired by pursuing such methods. The motive behind the translation was perhaps that Savarkar wanted to acquaint the Indian people with the great potentiality of secret societies for wresting freedom. To an



indomitable will, Savarkar combined outstanding courage, breadth of vision, and strength of intellect—and all the pomp and circumstance of Edwardian Britain could not dazzle, delude or overawe him.<sup>10</sup> According to his biographer, he went to London on the recommendation of Tilak to learn how to organise a revolution and carry on the struggle for independence from abroad.<sup>11</sup> Savarkar had not much faith in the theoretical radicalism of Shyamaji and under his direction the Indian revolutionaries in England began to propagate in public and in private a cult of sedition of the most violent kind. Savarkar also undertook purposely the writing of the history of the Indian Mutiny which he called the 'First War of Indian Independence'. The Government of India, already apprehensive of the dangers of seditious literature coming to India, approached the Secretary of State for India for cooperation in putting an end to the evil which was assuming grave proportions. They demanded that the opponents of the British rule in India should not be permitted to use the headquarters of the Empire as the centre of a seditious and revolutionary campaign.<sup>12</sup> There was nothing the Government of India or the India Office could do to suppress the activities of the Indian revolutionaries in England. The policy of resolute enforcement of the law against the publication of seditious literature and the revolutionaries in India no doubt resulted in its curtailment, but indirectly this led to the departure of many of the extremist leaders for London where they began the publication of revolutionary journals, pamphlets and leaflets without any hindrance.

The only effective step they could take was to prohibit the entry of revolutionary literature into India. About Savarkar's book on the Indian Mutiny, the Government of India knew that it was being published in Germany and promptly issued a notification under Section 26 of the Indian Post Office Act 1898 for the interception of all copies of a book or pamphlet in Marathi on the subject of The Indian Mutiny by V.D. Savarkar.<sup>13</sup> Without even having seen the book, the Director of Criminal Intelligence had reason to doubt that it would be a most objectionable book and Minto was hoping that they could stop it from entering India.<sup>14</sup> Savarkar wrote a spirited letter of protest against this procedure and poured out vials

of ridicule on the nervousness of the authorities.<sup>15</sup>

On the other hand, Valentine Chirol of *The Times* regarded the book as a very remarkable history of the mutiny, containing considerable research with grossest perversion of facts.<sup>16</sup> Savarkar's motive in writing the book was to inspire the people with a burning desire to rise again and wage a second and successful war to liberate their motherland.<sup>17</sup> Whatever the merits or demerits of the book, it became a text-book for young Indian revolutionaries both in India and abroad and in spite of the prohibition, a large number of copies found their way into India through various ingenious devices. Alongwith the publication of this book, the Indian revolutionaries also celebrated the 50th anniversary of the First War of Indian Independence in London. A circular was sent to all the students in England inviting them to attend the meeting in which they wished to admire as martyrs the principal leaders of the Indian mutiny who had been condemned as traitors by the British Government.<sup>18</sup> The meeting was attended by a large number of Indian students some of whom travelled from Oxford and Cambridge and even from Edinburgh.

Shortly afterwards came from London a leaflet *Oh Martyrs* in commemoration of the memorable year 1857. The authorities in India were perturbed over this growing trend in the revolutionary movement and Minto again drew Morley's attention to the dangerous activities of the London Indian Society where disloyal Indians were propagating sedition and disaffection against the British and requested him to devise measures for the suppression or at least the mitigation of the evil which was of grave importance.<sup>19</sup>

Lee-Warner, the Under-Secretary of State for India, sounded Morley after having received a secret report from the Director of Criminal Intelligence that in the meetings of the London Indian Society there were threats of assassinating British officers and a move to smuggle arms and bombs into India from Germany. He referred to the utter uselessness of the Scotland Yard to collect information about the activities of the Indian revolutionaries, because it failed miserably to distinguish between Hindus and Muhammedans, as harmless or dangerous agitators.<sup>50</sup> He suggested the employment of efficient Indian

agents to know what was going on amongst the Indians in London. Morley was surprised to know that no machinery had been organised for ascertaining "the existence and the ramifications of a regular dynamite and dagger confederacy in London, Paris, Berlin and New York." He agreed to the employment of a retired Indian police officer for watching the activities of the Indian revolutionary group in London.<sup>51</sup>

In India, the Government resorted to rigorous measures to combat the revolutionaries, at the same time to announcing the reform proposals to regain the support of the moderates. The reforms as it were, were welcomed by the moderates, but were criticised by the extremist section of the Congress. The Indian revolutionaries abroad condemned the policy of reforms with one voice and intensified the agitation for absolute freedom. In the view of the extremists the object of the whole reform scheme and the probable result of associating Indians with the Government was to strengthen and consolidate the empire. The enlarged Councils were likely to take away the men of ability from the side of the people and cause them to range themselves on the side of the Government.<sup>52</sup> Savarkar and his associates became more violent in their speeches and in November 1908, while delivering a lecture on "Are we really disarmed?", he referred to the war-like material available in India in spite of the Arms Act. "What was wanted", he declared, was "an active propaganda work in the Indian States and among the troops." He reminded them that it should be the duty of every Indian leaving these shores to work in that direction. The scare of the bombs had so terrified the British public that Savarkar boldly pronounced, "We must teach our people to hate the foreign oppressor and success is sure."<sup>53</sup> At the same time, he formulated an elaborate scheme for the liberation of India. In his view mere production of revolutionary literature and speeches, though quite effective in their own way, were not adequate to shake the foundation of the British empire.

Savarkar combined in himself the qualities of a propagandist and an organiser which were apparent in his scheme. The essential features of his scheme were: First, arms to be despatched to India and men to be sent to Belgium, America, Switzerland and Egypt to receive military training as well as to

learn manufacture of bombs. Secondly, he intended to distribute revolutionary literature amongst the soldiers with the object of inculcating in them the feelings of patriotism and hatred against the British. Thirdly, to carry out the programme of direct propaganda among the sepoys by members of the secret societies which were to be established in every province and every village in India. By these means, Savarkar felt convinced that it was possible for India to achieve independence in ten or fifteen years.<sup>54</sup>

Dunlop Smith, Private Secretary to Lord Minto, while in London during 1908 informed the Viceroy of the upsurge of political feelings among the Indians who had been affected by the revolutionary propaganda of Savarkar and his associates. In his view the students had particularly developed a distinct political consciousness and instinctively looked at everything from that stand point. To quote his words,

**'they say that every nation struggled through disturbance and bloodshed to manhood, and they must expect the same thing. They are prepared to face everything as an inevitable preliminary to a larger growth.'**<sup>55</sup>

Accordingly, direct and indirect methods of suppression were adopted in India in order to immobilise political agitation. Suppression of newspapers, conviction of editors, gagging public speakers and prohibition of political meetings were the main features of the policy. 'Crush the extremist, rally the moderates to the side of the Government' was the advice given to Englishmen for stamping out extremism in this country. Even this drastic policy failed to stem the rising tide of national resurgence which had already enlarged its field of operation inside India and was developing in the far-flung distant lands. As a result London became a place of refuge for those Indians who managed to escape from the clutches of the British Government in India as London had become the rallying point for the rebels of not only from India but also from the continental countries.

From India G.S. Khaparde of Amraoti, Lajpat Rai, Har Dayal, and Ram Bhaj Dutt from the Punjab, and Bipan Chandra

Pal from Calcutta quitted India in August 1908. Though these leaders, with the exception of Har Dayal, did not espouse the policy of violence advocated by the Indian revolutionaries, their presence in England lent a great impetus indirectly to the activities of the London group. Some of these leaders still believed in the policy of the Congress.<sup>56</sup> The revolutionaries, on the other hand, advocated that it was no use delivering lectures and holding meetings to afford the British any opportunity of keeping a close watch over their activities. The revolutionaries believed in secret and violent methods which were demonstrated practically by an assault on Lee-Warner on 12 January 1909 by one of its members Vasudev Bhattacharji, who was convicted and sentenced to six months imprisonment. The police investigations made it perfectly clear that the assault on Lee-Warner was not accidental or personal; it was committed in pursuance of a deliberate plan by the members of the India House.<sup>57</sup>

Minto again impressed on Morley the effect of the propaganda from abroad. He told him that it was needless to dilate on the amount of harm which the seditious literature sent from abroad was doing in India. He mentioned the steps which the British Government of India had taken to prevent its introduction into the country but pleaded that his initiative alone could not put an end to the evil which was very harmful for the stability of the British interests in India.<sup>58</sup>

Under instructions from Morley, the India Office appointed a few more police detectives to keep a watch on the activities of the Indian revolutionaries settled in UK, and an officer was also especially deputed to London by the Government of India. The main purpose of this step was to secure the arrest of Savarkar, the kingpin of the movement, in order to suppress it.<sup>59</sup> However, the Indian revolutionaries continued with their secret activities with increased zest and even undertook the preparation of a treatise on bombs and explosives and training in revolver-shooting at a range near the Tottenham Court road.<sup>60</sup>

Meanwhile, the Government of India after having intercepted certain letters from Savarkar to his brother Ganesh Savarkar, informed the Secretary of State about the valuable

information they had furnished and possessed about the acts of the revolutionaries, and the possibility of incriminating Savarkar and his brother against whom criminal proceedings had already been instituted by the Government of Bombay.<sup>61</sup>

As a result of prosecution Ganesh Savarkar was duly convicted and sentenced on 9 June 1909 to transportation for life for the crime of being the author of two books of songs considered to be seditious by the Government. This arbitrary policy of the Government along with the restrictions which were then being imposed on the members of the India House had an adverse effect on the Indian revolutionaries in London. A report was received that at the meeting on 20 June, Savarkar was very violent and advocated the wholesale murder of Englishmen in India. He asked everyone present to do his best to serve the country by sacrificing his life at the earliest possible moment.<sup>62</sup>

The above information was sent to the Commissioner of Police, London, with a note of warning that it was quite possible that the next outrage might be committed in London.<sup>63</sup> Minto also sounded Morley privately regarding the existence of a widespread conspiracy to undermine British authority in India by assassinating its officers and that some such attempt was likely to be made in London.<sup>64</sup>

In pursuance of the policy of assassination to terrorize the British officials, who were employing unjust methods to crush revolutionary activities in India and abroad, the Indian revolutionaries decided to demonstrate what had till then been a mere propaganda. They planned to assassinate Lord Curzon, Lord Kitchener and Sir Curzon Wylie, Political A.D.C. to the Secretary of State for India. The last named person had become quite obnoxious recently on account of the strict measures undertaken by him to check the activities of the Indian revolutionaries in London. In the scheme of these assassinations Sir Curzon Wylie became the first victim when Madan Lal Dhingra (1887-1909) shot him at the Imperial Institute on 1 July 1909. A Parsee doctor, Cowasji Lalcaca, who was standing nearby and had made an effort in the direction of the assassin was also instantly shot.<sup>65</sup>

After having received warnings from Minto, Morley had

long felt that the murder club would extend its activities to Europe. He was shocked by the terrible news of this attempt on Wylie's life. Considering the gravity of the crime he seriously wanted to ascertain whether it was the result of an individual action or of a criminal conspiracy and requested Minto to find out whether the assassination was premeditated and perpetrated from political motives.<sup>66</sup> The preliminary investigations revealed that Dhingra had resorted to the assassination "intentionally and of purpose as a humble protest against the inhuman transportation and hanging of Indian youths."<sup>67</sup>

Regardless of how many press laws were passed, how many agitators were deported or how many concessions the British Government offered.<sup>68</sup> Morley was convinced that "Indian discontent or alienation or whatever we like to call it" would ultimately "be sure to run into the same channels of violence as Italian, Russian and Irish discontent."<sup>69</sup> Minto in India was more hopeful and believed that good was likely to come out of what had happened and anticipated "that people at home" would "at last realise the danger of allowing the hatching of sedition in their midst—not only for themselves but for us in India."<sup>70</sup>

In spite of what had happened, Moreley was gratified with the prosecution of Dhingra, and the Attorney-General went to the Chief Justice and urged upon him to conduct the trial "without a word of political heroics" and to treat Dhingra "as soberly as an ordinary murder." Some of the members of the Secretary of State's Council taking a lenient view suggested that Dhingra might be sent to Broadmore for life, but Morley, though worried that the execution might lead to retaliation and bloodshed not only against the people at the India Office but also against lonely Europeans in remote places in India, still strongly favoured execution. He wrote to Minto, "We hang a murderer when we are likely to contact one and so we shall hang Dhingra."<sup>71</sup>

Dhingra was put to trial on 10 July 1909 at the Westminster Court. It was the shortest trial in the history of British justice lasting only an hour and a half. Dhingra pleaded guilty and boldly refused to put in any defence beyond a dignified

justification of his act as part of the political warfare in which India was engaged and said defiantly

**Just as the Germans have no right to occupy this country, so the English people have no right to occupy India and it is perfectly justifiable on our part to kill any Englishman who is polluting our sacred land.<sup>72</sup>**

Dhingra was not afraid of death and it was admitted by a well-known contemporary observer, W.S. Blunt, that no Christian martyr faced his judges more fearlessly or with greater dignity.<sup>73</sup> Dhingra was sentenced to death. His last wish was that he should be cremated in conformity with Hindu rites and that no non-Hindu should touch his body. A petition was submitted to the Secretary of State requesting him to hand over Dhingra's body to V.V.S. Aiyar. The petition was turned down by the India Office and Dhingra was cremated after the execution on 17 August 1909.<sup>71</sup> The refusal was nothing short of the exhibition of heartlessness and meanness indicative of a revengeful spirit most unworthy of the British.

The assassination of Curzon Wylie produced two types of reactions. On the one hand there was an unqualified disapproval of Dhingra's action by some, while others acclaimed him as a patriot and martyr. The British and Indian press as well as the moderate leaders of the Indian National Congress regarded the assassination as a "national calamity." Moderate leaders like Gokhale, Banerjea and the Agha Khan were horrified; even Dhingra's own father wired the Government apologising for his son's misdeed. Dhingra's brother apologetically wrote to Dunlop-Smith that "it was an irony of fate that in a family like ours, so deeply loyal to the Government, and so gratefully attached to the British people, a youngman should degenerate into a murderer."<sup>75</sup> But at the same time a London newspaper *New Age* commenting on the execution of Dhingra wrote that

**India in the future will regard him as a hero with full responsibility; we say India will be right. Our own opinion must be put on record. It is the beginning of the end of British rule in India.<sup>76</sup>**



In the opinion of a Swiss writer the assassination amounted to a powerful denunciation directed against the tyrannical and blood-sucking Anglo-Indian Government showing England that a young intelligent and enlightened generation had sprung up, who was intent upon fighting for the political and intellectual transformation of India with every means possible. In this, one rightly perceived at that time the desperate attempt of a young Indian patriot to attract the public opinion of all civilized countries to the unbearable position of his fatherland.<sup>77</sup>

The assassination, however, did not bring the end of the British rule in India. Instead it opened a new phase between the Indian revolutionaries abroad and the India Office. Henceforth, it was accepted as a matter of policy by the India Office to crush the Indian revolutionary movement outside India since it was not possible for the Government of India to do so. Dhingra's crime suggested, in the considered opinion of the India Office, the paramount need for making a clean sweep of the India House and tightening of control over the students proceeding from India. Some Indian papers held Shyamaji responsible for the assassination and recommended that he alongwith all his propagandists of India House and the *Indian Sociologist* "must be annihilated once for all."<sup>78</sup> Immediately after the execution of Dhingra, Morley informed Minto that, "you will be glad to see that the Home Office are keeping a hunt against the printer of the *Indian Sociologist*. The Attorney General came to ask my opinion. I had no hesitation to saying 'strike'."<sup>79</sup>

King Edward VII instructed Minto to take serious steps for the prevention of the youngmen coming over to England with no fixed occupations and falling into bad hands which they invariably do. They only learnt sedition and treason which they infused into the minds of their countrymen both in England and India.<sup>80</sup>

Further investigations in the assassination of Wyllie revealed that it was engineered by Savarkar and that it was a political murder deliberately brought about by the anarchist society of the India House, "who were guided in their choice of a victim chiefly by the considerations that Curzon-Wyllie was a prominent official of the India Office", and was

taking a leading role in organising measures to prevent Indian students from falling into the Society's clutches.<sup>81</sup> The police recommended the arrest of Savarkar and other leaders of the India House which in their view was likely to sound the death-knell of the revolutionary movement in England. India Office and the Government of India henceforth directed their attention to the question of arrest and deportation of Indian revolutionaries operating in England.

### Arrest of Savarkar

The series of assassinations both in India and abroad brought home to the authorities the evidence regarding close connections between Indian revolutionary societies in India and abroad. After seeing these alarming reports, Minto informed Morley that what they had to face now was a dangerous conspiracy, and the consequent panic which was spreading amongst the Indian and European population. Minto did not think that there was any political party of importance directly advocating the commission of anarchical crimes, but he was convinced of the existence of a dangerous conspiracy aimed at the assassination of British officers.<sup>82</sup> Minto's fears had been further confirmed by the murder of Jackson at Nasik,<sup>83</sup> which disclosed that the crime was committed with one of the several Browning pistols sent by Savarkar from England to further the cause of the revolutionary society through Chatturbhuj Amin, who was returning to India. The Government of India had been trying to implicate Savarkar but had met with no success. However, as a result of assassinations in India and England, the Director of Criminal Intelligence categorically recommended that their policy henceforth, should be to utilize all the resources at their command for keeping in close touch with movements of the more dangerous revolutionaries in England.<sup>84</sup>

On the basis of the evidence collected in Jackson's murder, the Government of India asked the Government of Bombay whether it was possible to obtain action under the Fugitive Offenders Act of 1881 for the arrest and deportation to India of all the persons belonging to the London group against whom a *prima facie* case could be established.<sup>85</sup> It was intended to

take drastic action against all the Indian revolutionaries in England, but the evidence against them was incomplete. The only person who could be easily implicated was Savarkar.

The Indian revolutionaries had to restrict their activities on account of the close watch which the detectives from the Scotland Yard were then busy keeping on their movements. Shyamaji by then settled in Paris decided to close the India House as the objective for which it was established, "namely instilling hatred of the English and infusing new spirit of independence into intellectual youths coming over to England, was already accomplished and had produced tangible results."

His idea was to dispose of the India House and with that money to open a new one in Paris, to be developed as an active centre for anti-British movement, since London was no longer a safe place to carry on such activities. While the Indian revolutionaries started reorganising their activities in London and Paris, the Government of India was making every effort to procure false or true evidence by which they could arrest all or at least the chief members of the India House. In the opinion of Cleveland, the Director of Criminal Intelligence there was no need for wasting time in a hopeless effort to deal legally with the Indian revolutionaries who were outside the pale of their legal system and their laws, and was firmly in favour of arresting them by whatever means available. Harold Stuart from the Home Department of the Government of India, however, rejected the above proposal and insisted on the collection of legal evidence in case the Indian revolutionaries did "eventually enter any portion of the British dominions."<sup>87</sup> Savarkar had left for Paris in the beginning of 1910 with a view to collaborating with the group there for finalising the programme of revolutionary action, but he came back to London on 13 March 1910 to wind up the affairs. The vigilant London police who had already been anxiously waiting for him immediately arrested him at the Victoria station on a warrant under the Fugitive Offenders Act. Savarkar was represented by Powell and J.M. Parik, his solicitor being R. Vaughan, who applied for bail which was refused. Minto believed that the arrest of Savarkar was likely to hasten the process of disintegration of the London group and his belief was confirmed when

the police discovered that there was a considerable consternation among the revolutionaries.<sup>88</sup>

The Indian revolutionaries after the arrest of Savarkar were organised under the leadership of Aiyer and Virendranath Chattopadhyaya.<sup>89</sup> They suspended their activities temporarily and concentrated their attention on saving Savarkar from the clutches of the British authorities. They started collections for Savarkar's Defence Fund hoping that he could be tried in England only, where his acquittal was regarded as more probable, while in India under the British legal system he was sure to be given at least transportation for life.<sup>90</sup> The authorities in India had meticulously prepared the case against Savarkar with hardly any room for his being tried in England under the Fugitive Offenders Act.

After the formal hearing of the case in London, Savarkar's return to India was ordered and he was taken on board *P & O SS. Morea* on 1 July 1910. His associates had prepared a scheme for Savarkar's escape from the prison, but on account of its premature leakage it was abandoned. But Savarkar successfully escaped on 8 July through the open porthole of the lavatory, when the ship was standing in the docks at Marseilles. He swam to the shore in the hope of meeting his compatriots, who were waiting for him with a car there, but before he could cross the docks, he asked the French policeman to take him to a magistrate. The policeman instead brought him back to the ship and handed him over to his British escort.<sup>91</sup>

Thus again Savarkar's colleagues failed to secure his freedom. But his arrest on the French soil was a flagrant breach of international law since legally the British guards were powerless to apprehend him. The Indians with the help of their friends in Paris and England got up a strong agitation against the alleged violation of French sovereignty. The great furore in the French press and the French circles compelled the French Government to demand the return of Savarkar to the free soil of France or if London was reluctant to hand over Savarkar to the French the case was to be taken to The Hague Tribunal. M.F. de Pressense, President of the League of the Rights of Man, issued an appeal urging the French Government to insist on the liberation of Savarkar and to refer the matter to the

International Court of Arbitration at The Hague in the event of British refusal.<sup>92</sup>

The socialist Mayor of Marseilles, Jean Jaures, and others persisted in their criticism that the French Government had violated an important right of asylum, of which England herself was the protagonist. Keir Hardie, the British Labour Party leader raised the question at the International Socialist Congress at Copenhagen on 6 September 1910 and had a resolution passed that every attending country "must regard as valuable the right of asylum and, accordingly, Savarkar must be handed over to the French Government."<sup>93</sup> But no one in India believed that Savarkar would be sent back to France. Once the British had captured him, they were likely to do their best to keep him in spite of the international law, because in the opinion of the *Mahratta* there never was any chance of any serious unpleasantness occurring between the French and the British governments over the life of an unfortunate Indian.<sup>94</sup>

*L'Humanite'* edited by Marx's grandson Jean Longuet, regarded Savarkar's arrest as an abominable violation of the right of asylum, which was effected in absolute secrecy. It further commented that in "giving up a political refugee, the Marseilles authorities have committed an outrage of which account will most assuredly be demanded and in respect of which the sanction of the state itself" was necessary.<sup>95</sup>

The situation was quite embarrassing and the Government of India was strongly opposed to the case of Savarkar being taken to the International Court. They sent to Paris Wallinger, their London based Secret Police Agent., with the object of persuading the French Government to drop the matter. During the private discussions Sir Francis Bertie, the British Ambassador, impressed upon Wallinger the necessity of the British authorities giving up Savarkar to the French to ensure *entente cordiale*. But Wallinger took all pains to explain to him the importance of Savarkar in the ranks of the Indian revolutionaries and the impetus his return would give to the Indian revolutionaries abroad and their subversive activities. He made it clear to him that the Indian Government would look at his surrender to France as a very serious obstacle in their attempt to stamp out sedition. Further reports from Wallinger

show that though the French Government was quite adamant, the French Police was favourable and very helpful, still they also appealed to him to impress the home authorities to accede to France's demands otherwise it might lead to friction.<sup>96</sup>

As a matter of fact Savarkar's case created problems for both the parties, especially for the French, who were then faced with serious opposition in the National Assembly from the socialist deputies. In order to save their face, the French authorities proposed to the British Government to settle the terms of arbitration in the dispute by the International Court so that an announcement could be made that the two Governments had agreed on arbitration.<sup>97</sup>

The agreement finally signed was the outcome of prolonged negotiations at London and Paris. During the discussions it was originally contemplated by (Sir Edward Grey) that the Court should consist of three neutral arbitrators. But the French Government evinced so strong a wish that one of their nationals should act as an arbitrator that Grey, instead of snapping the negotiations and thereby bringing about an *impasse*, agreed finally to a compromise by which the tribunal was to have five arbitrators, of whom two were to be the nationals of the respective states and the remaining three were to be neutrals.<sup>98</sup> The court of arbitration was to decide whether or not Savarkar in conformity with the international law was to be restored by the British Government to the Government of France.

After the agreement the French Government asked the British authorities to stop legal proceedings against Savarkar in India. Savarkar had landed at Bombay on 22 July and was being tried in the Nasik Conspiracy Case. But neither the India Office nor the Government of India were prepared to meet the wishes of the French Government regarding the suspension of the judicial proceedings against Savarkar pending the decision of The Hague Tribunal. With a view to maintaining cordial relations, however, the India Office agreed to give an undertaking that in the event of trial resulting in the conviction of Savarkar the execution of any sentence passed upon him would be suspended till the decision of The Hague Tribunal was announced. They also agreed to surrender Savarkar to the French in the event of the case being settled against the

British Government. But in a secret telegram the Secretary of State hinted to the Viceroy that in case of surrender if he should appear in British territory "our rights against him as a fugitive offender would revive."<sup>99</sup>

But soon after this the India Office requested the Government of India to consider whether the extradition of Savarkar on account of public safety be demanded from the French under the Treaty in the event of the decision going against them. The idea of extradition was whole-heartedly supported by the Government of India since they viewed his liberation as a very serious matter. In their opinion Savarkar was an "extremely dangerous man" who 'would be regarded as a hero and his influence and power for mischief would be greatly increased' if set free.<sup>100</sup> While agreeing with their assessment of Savarkar, Crewe, the Secretary of State for India, impressed upon Hardinge, the new Viceroy, the necessity of a firm conviction of Savarkar by the Bombay Government, because in his opinion the decision of The Hague Tribunal was likely to depend to a great extent on the proof which could be produced to establish Savarkar as guilty of abetting murder. But if that charge was postponed until after the arbitration tribunal had decided, "our strongest card would remain unplayed."<sup>101</sup> The conviction of Savarkar was viewed by the India Office as extremely essential both from the point of making the extradition easier as well as to influence the decision of the judges at The Hague.<sup>102</sup> Crewe again wrote to Hardinge that though technically The Hague tribunal was "concerned with the escape rather than the crime" of Savarkar, yet the fact that "political conviction had been obtained might weigh with them." He further convinced him about the exigency of linking Savarkar with the particular murder of an individual which might "be necessary for conviction" and if "any leniency" was to be shown to him, it would be in the "sentence but not in verdict". If this was not achieved, he warned, "Savarkar will get off at The Hague."<sup>103</sup>

The whole machinery of the Government of India and the Bombay Government was then directed towards the conviction of Savarkar. He was hurriedly tried by a special tribunal in the Nasik Conspiracy Case under Section 121-A for abetment

of the murder of Jackson. The Court sentenced him to transportation for life and forfeiture of all his property.

The Hague tribunal after a cursory consideration of the case gave its verdict on 24 February 1911. The court held that as the *gendarmierie* was acting under the orders of his superiors, Savarkar was rightly handed back to the British escort on the ship and the British Government, who had Savarkar in its custody, was under no obligation to restore him back to the French Government because of a mistake committed by a foreign agent.<sup>104</sup> The Court, however, conceded that an irregularity had been committed in the arrest of Savarkar and in his being handed over to the British police, but decided that no useful purpose could be served by transferring him back to the French soil especially after he had been found guilty of the gravest charges by the highest tribunal in the land of his birth.<sup>105</sup>

Both Crewe and Hardinge were very happy over the "decision of the sages at The Hague<sup>106</sup>", especially when it was apparent that Savarkar was now to "spend the rest of his days with his brother in the Andaman Island.<sup>107</sup>"

The judgement came as a shock to freedom loving people all over the world. "It was clear from the very beginning," commented a German newspaper, "that the French Government was ready to help its ally and to prevent one of its uncomfortable prisoners from escaping while in its waters or on its territory and it could not in consequence afterwards demand his restoration on the ground of a right of asylum..." In the view of the same paper, the Tribunal had no time to examine whether arrangements such as were made between the two police commissioners could abrogate the right of asylum. The paper further wrote that through out this episode the attitude of the French Government had been influenced by her feelings of alliance with England and that the wish to please the latter had been stronger than the desire to preserve the right of which, as representative of a Republican people, it ought to be exceptionally proud.<sup>108</sup> Some of the other continental newspapers described the verdict of The Hague tribunal as something that had 'reduced the right of asylum to a farce.' The judgement caused a great disappointment amongst the Indian revolutionaries



and as expected by the Government of India, the removal from the scene of action of Savarkar, who was marked by them "as the ablest of the Indian revolutionaries in Europe," hastened the process of disintegration of the London group. Still Hardinge was not wrong in thinking that though Savarkar's removal had given a "great blow to the extremists" in India and abroad, yet he anticipated "some more political assassinations in retaliation for Savarkar's loss of liberty."<sup>109</sup>

As a result of the prosecution of Savarkar, the other members of the India House now realised that London was no longer a safe place for their operations; they began so to search for more congenial places to carry on their anti-British activities. The leading workers, who were considered dangerous by the British police, Chattopadhyaya, Aiyer and Har Dayal, left London and made Paris and other European capitals as their centres of activities.

The revolutionary movement which began on a moderate scale in 1905 reached its apex in 1909 and 1910. There now remained in London leaders like Pal, his son Niranjan Pal and Khaparde. Pal tried to revive the movement and alongwith J.M. Parikh, formed the *Hind Bradari*, a society for Indian students. However, his efforts came to nothing.<sup>110</sup> The Indian revolutionaries under the bold leadership of Savarkar had been able to establish close and active contacts with secret and revolutionary societies in India and an elaborate programme for the purchase of weapons and "storing them in the neighbouring countries to be used when opportunities should occur had been drawn, but the strong hand of the British Government removed him from the scene of action. "He was caught," writes Lajpat Rai, about Savarkar, "because he was reckless; he never cared about his personal safety; he had the dash of an old warrior who always put himself in the post of danger."<sup>111</sup>

Savarkar and his associates advocated that complete independence for India could be achieved only by means of a violent revolution. The task was difficult but they had confidence and moral courage to achieve it. Despite the arrest of their capable leader, they still advocated the assassination of the British officers as the first stage of revolution. They were convinced that without absolute political independence the country

could never rise to that exalted position amongst the other nations of the world which was her due. *Swarajya*, they knew, could never be attained except by waging a bloody and relentless war against the British. With this end in view, they expanded the scope of their activities and established their centres in Paris, Berlin, New York and Tokyo.

### References

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2. Har Bilas, Sharda, *Recollections and Reminiscences* (Ajmer, 1951), p. 19.
3. J.C. Ker, *Political Trouble in India* (Calcutta, 1917), p. 171.
4. *Memorandum on the Anti-British Agitation among Natives of India in England*, Part I. (Hereafter referred to as *Anti-British Agitation in England*). Foreign Department, General B, Confidential 1909, No. 13 N.A.I.
5. Shyamaji to Wedderburn, 4 December 1904 and Wedderburn to Shyamaji, 19 February 1905. *The Indian Sociologist*, April 1905.
6. Indulal Yajnik, *Shyamaji Krishna Varma* (Bombay, 1950).
7. *The Indian Sociologist*, January 1905. It appeared regularly from January 1905 to July 1914. At the outbreak of the war, when Shyamaji sought to shelter in Switzerland, the publication was stopped on the suggestion of the Swiss Government. It was republished from 1920-22.
8. *Memorandum on Anti-British Agitation in England*, Part I. F.D., General B, Confidential 1909, No. 13. The London Indian Society under the Presidentship of Dadabhai Naoroji passed a resolution congratulating Shyamaji for his munificent donation in founding these fellowships. Dadabhai to Shyamaji, 30 January 1905, *Indian Sociologist*, March 1905.
9. *Memorandum on Anti-British Agitation in England*, Part I. F.D., General B, Confidential 1909, No. 1909, No. 13. By numerous speeches and writing as well as by personal contacts with Indians in London, Hyndman exercised direct or indirect influence on the Indian

- nationalist movement. See Chushichi Tsuzuki, *H.M. Hyndman and British Socialism* (London, 1961).
10. See Appendix I for the constitution of the Indian Home Rule Society.
  11. *Indian Sociologist*, March 1905.
  12. Indulal Yajnik, op. cit., p. 119.
  13. V. Chirol, *Indian Unrest* (London, 1910), p. 148.
  14. Note by Gokhale, no date. Gokhale Papers, F. No. 404. N.A.I.
  15. M.D. Vidwans, (ed.), *Letters of Lokmanya Tilak* (Poona, 1966), pp. 255-56.
  16. *Memorandum on the Anti-British Agitation in England*, Part I. Foreign Department, Confidential B, General 1909, No. 13. N.A.I.
  17. *Indian Sociologist*, February 1905.
  18. *Indian Sociologist*, October 1905.
  19. *Ibid.*
  20. *Ibid.*, August 1906.
  21. Indulal Yajnik, op. cit., p. 158.
  22. Note by Political A.D.C. India Office, 24 December 1905. F.D., Internal B, May 1909, No. 308. N.A.I.
  23. Government of India to India Office, 14 March 1906. *Ibid.* The names of the persons selected were Abdullah Al-Mamun Suhrawardi, Syed Abdul Majid, Sheikh Abdul Aziz, V.D. Savarkar, P.N. Mukherje, Moinuddin Ahmed, K.L. Varma, P.C. Sen, R.G. Pradhan Parmeshwar Lal, and Swarup Chandra Mukherji.
  24. "The Report of the Departmental Committee on Indian Students." Judicial and Public Department No. 840/1908. I.O.L.
  25. *Indian Sociologist*, July, 1907.
  26. *The Pioneer*, 16 November 1905, quoted in the *Indian Sociologist*, January 1906.
  27. Quoted in the *Indian Sociologist*, December 1906.
  28. *Indian Sociologist*, December 1907.
  29. *Indian Sociologist*, December 1907.
  30. According to the British Intelligence report Shyamaji carried of all his political activities on the advice and assistance of Pal and Tilak. Foreign Department (General B) Confidential 1909, No. 13. However, it was Har Dayal, then a student at Oxford, who suggested the constitution and a programme for the establishment of Political Missions in India. See "A Note by Har Dayal on the Political Emancipation of India," Har Dayal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library' (N.M.M.L.).

31. *The Mahratta*, (Poona), 17 March 1907.
32. *Ibid.*, "Memorandum on Anti-British Agitation in England, Part I," Foreign Department, General B Confidential, 1909, No. 13. The reason why Pal could not deliver the lectures was explained by him in a speech on 4 November 1908 : 'events took a shape in India that sent me to jail just when I was arranging to organise these lectures; and when I came out of jail conditions were not favourable for getting up these series of lectures'.
33. *Ibid.* Shyamaji's biographer, however, believes that he left England before this incident in the Parliament. According to him Shyamaji left in June 1907. Indulal Yajnik, *op. cit.*, p. 255. It is possible that Shyamaji left England in June 1907 and after the uproar in the British Parliament he thought of permanently settling in Paris. See *Indian Sociologist*, September 1907 for the reasons which compelled Shyamaji to settle in Paris.
34. Indulal Yajnik, *op. cit.*, p. 165.
35. Note D.C.1 , 13 May 1908. Home Political (H.P.), Deposit, May 1908 No. 1. N.A.I.
36. *Ibid.* Events moved with rapid succession in Bengal after the partition and a number of revolutionary and secret societies were formed. By far the most important was the *Anusilan Samiti* founded by Barrister P. Mitra which became during 1906-08 the largest revolutionary organisation in Northern India. Newspapers like the *Sandhya*, the *Bande Mataram* and the *Yugantar* of the Indian revolutionaries carried on anti-British propaganda. Propaganda was followed by the assassination of the British officials. The revolutionaries were convicted in a number of cases, e.g., Alipore Bomb Case, Nasik Conspiracy, Gwalior Conspiracy, Dacca Conspiracy, Barisal Conspiracy, and the activities of these societies were declared unlawful. For details see *Sedition Committee Report* (Calcutta, 1918).
37. Har-Bilas, Sharda, *Shyamaji Krishna Varma* (Ajmer, 1954), p. 114.
38. Chitra Gupta, *Life of Barrister Savarkar* (New Delhi, 1939), p. 54.
39. "Memorandum on Anti-British agitation in England, Part I" Foreign Dept. General B Confidential 1909, No. 13. N.A.I.
40. Vidya Sagar Anand, *Savarkar* (London, 1967), p. 29
41. Dhanajay Keer, *Savarkar and His Times* (Bombay, 1950), p. 27.
43. Viceroy to Secretary of State, 4 March 1909, H.P. A, March 1909, Nos. 148-50. N.A.I.
43. Note by Lord Minto 14.12.1908. H.P. A, February 1909. Nos. 13-13A. N.A.I.

44. *Ibid.*

45. Chitra Gupta, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

The letter by Savarkar was published in *Kal* in which he pointed out that "it may be legal to suppress a book even before it is published, but certainly it can never be just."

*Native Newspaper Reports, Bombay, 1909.*

46. V. Chirol, *Indian Unrest* (London, 1910), p. 149

47. V.D. Savarkar, *Samagra Savarkar Wangmaya*, Vol. 5 (Poona, 1963), p. 7.

48. "Memorandum on Anti-British agitation in England, Part I" Foreign Department, General B, Confidential 1909, No. 13. Savarkar's book was translated into Urdu and was serialised by the *Ghadr* from its very first issue.

49. Viceroy to Secretary of State 4 March 1909. H.P.A, March 1909, Nos. 148-50. N.A.I.

It is interesting to note that Madan Mohan Malaviya regarded *Oh Martyrs* as an incendiary leaflet and while sending it to the Government of U.P. he requested them to take such steps as it might deem proper to prevent the circulation of such poisonous matter. Madan Mohan Malaviya to W.W. Hose 23 Aug. 1908, Home Political Deposit, December 1908, No. 19.

Other revolutionary pamphlets which were issued from London were "Maro Firringi Ko", "Choose Oh Indian Princes", "Khalsa", "Bande Mataram" in memory of Madan Lal Dhingra, pamphlets sent from England see Home Political Deposit, April 1911, No. 7.

50. Note by Director, Criminal Intelligence 30-9-1907. H.P.D. June 1909, No. 30. N.A.I.

51. Morley to Minto, 4 June 1908. Minto Papers. National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh.

52. Weekly report D.C.I.. 20 Feb. 1909. Home Poll. A. June 1909, Nos. 40-47. N.A.I.

53. Weekly Report, D.C.I., 12 December 1908. H.P.B, January 1909, Nos. 106-12. N.A.I.

54. Statement of H.K. Koteagaonkar, a London associate of Savarkar. Judicial and Public Department F. No. 1032/1910. I.O.L.

55. Dunlop-Smith to Lady Minto, 12 July 1908, Martin Gilbert, *Servant of India: A Study of Imperial Rule from 1905 to 1910 as told through the Correspondence and Diaries of Sir James Dunlop-Smith* (London 1966), p. 165.

56. Lajpat Rai held aloof from the revolutionary party and was busy with the task of contacting the members of the Parliament. Foreign Department, General B, Confidential 1909, No. 13, N.A.I.
57. "Memorandum on Anti-British agitation in England, Part I" Foreign Department, General B, Confidential, 1909, No. 13. N.A.I.
58. Government of India to Secretary of State 4 March 1909. H.P.A, March 1909, Nos. 148.50. N.A.I.
59. Note, D.C.I. dated 21.9.1909. H.P. A, January 1911, Nos. 52-54. N.A.I.
60. *Memorandum on anti-British agitation in England, Part II*, Foreign Dept. Conf General B, 1910, No. 14. N.A.I.
61. Minto to Morely, 27 May 1909.  
H.P. A, June 1909, Nos. 132-34. N.A.I.
62. Weekly Report Director, Criminal Intelligence, 3 July 1909.  
H.P. B, August 1909, Nos. 120-29. N.A.I.
63. Note, Director, Criminal Intelligence, 5 July 1909.  
H.P. A, September 1909, Nos. 66-68. N.A.I.
64. Minto to Morley, 27 May 1909.  
H.R. A, June 1909, Nos. 132-34. N.A.I.
65. "Memo on Anti-British agitation in England Part II." Foreign Deptt. Conf. General A, 1910, No. 14. N.A.I.
66. Secretary of State to Viceroy, 2 July 1909. H.P.A, September 1909, Nos. 66 68. N.A.I.
67. "*Memorandum on Anti-British agitation in England, Part II.*" F.D. General, Confidential B, 1910, No. 14. See Appendix II Statement of Dhingra regarding the motive for committing assassination which Churchill regarded as the finest piece in patriotic literature of the world. Chitra Gupta, op. cit., p. 95.
68. Stephen E. Koss, *John Morley at the India Office, 1905.10* (London, 1969), p. 192.
69. Morley to Minto, 8 July 1909. Morley Papers, I.O.L.
70. Minto to Morley, 7 July 1909. Morley Papers, I.O.L.
71. Morley to Minto, 23 July 1909, Morley Papers. I.O.L.
72. "Dhingra's statement in the Court"-Papers regarding the trial of Madan Lal Dhingra acquired from Public Record Office, London by the NAI (Microfilm copy only).

After Lord Chief Justice had passed the sentence of death 'Thank you my Lord' Dhingra said "I am proud to have the honour to lay down my humble life for my country."

73. W.S. Blunt, *Diaries* (London, 1932), p. 673.  
Blunt discussed the case with Khaparde, who was in England at the time and both were full of admiration for Dhingra and both agreed that if India could produce five hundred men as absolutely without fear as Dhingra, she could achieve her freedom. *Ibid.*
74. Dhananjay Keer, *op. cit.*, pp. 55-56.
75. Behari Lal Dhingra to Dunlop-Smith, 7 July, 1909. Martin Gilbert, *op. cit.*, p. 193. Banerjea, who was in London, lost no time in convening a meeting of Indian residents to express condemnation of the outrage.
76. *New Age* (London), 20 August 1909. J. and P. Department No. 956/1909.
77. Quoted in *The Indian Sociologist*, August 1912.
78. Morley to Minto, 26 August 1909, Morley Papers. Subsequently Guy Aldred, the printer of *The Indian Sociologist*, was convicted.
79. King Edward VII to Minto, 17 August 1909, Martin Gilbert, *op. cit.*, p. 195. Chirol also recommended that: "these organisations deserve to be closely and continuously watched, If we want to do any real good, we must spread our nets as wide as the revolutionaries have spread." V. Chirol, *Indian Unrest* (London, 1910), p. 181.
80. "Memorandum on Anti-British agitation in England, Part II" F.D. Confidential B, General, 1910, No. 14. N.A.I.
81. Savarkar before his coming to England was a member of *Mitra Mela*, a secret society of Nasik. Under the guidance of his two brothers, Ganesh Savarkar and Narayan Savarkar, *Mitra Mela* became very popular and assumed a new name, *Abhinav Bharat* (New India). V.D. Savarkar also gave this name to the society in London. The society had branches at Bombay, Poona and connections at Aurangabad, Hyderabad and Gwalior. The Indian revolutionaries abroad were in close contact not only with this society but also with *Anusilan Samiti* (Improvement Society) of Bengal, which also believed in the overthrow of the British Government by violent means. The society had its headquarters at Dacca and branches at Mymensingh, Tippera, Faridpur, Dinajpur and Sylhet.
82. Minto to Morley, 23 December 1909, Morley Papers. I.O.L.

83. Minto to Morley, 27 January 1909, Morley Papers. I.O.L. Jackson, the District Magistrate of Nasik, who had tried the case of Ganesh Savarakar sentencing him to transportation for life was shot on 21 December 1909 at a farewell party at Vijayanand Theatre by a Brahmin youth Anand Lakshman Kanhare. "Note on Nasik Conspiracy Case." H.P.B, July 1918, Nos. 292-316. N.A.I.
84. "C.J. Stevenson Moore's Note," 21 September 1909. H.P.A., January 1911, Nos. 52-64. N.A.I.
85. Government of Bombay to Govt. of India, 4 March 1910. H.P.A, May 1910, Nos. 133-35. N.A.I.
86. "Memorandum on Anti-British agitation in England, Part III", F.D. General B, Confidential 1910, No. 43. N.A.I.
87. Cleveland to Stuart, 2 Feb, 1910. [Home Political Deposit, June 1910, No. 23. N.A.I.
88. Minto to Morley, 17 March 1910, Morley Papers. I.O.L. Commenting on the arrest of Savarkar, Blunt wrote that "a queer state of things for us to have come to in England and a good example of how Imperial despotism abroad is ruining national liberty at Home." Blunt, op. cit., p. 713.
89. *Indian Agitators Abroad* (Simla, 1911), p. 176.
90. "Memorandum on Anti-British agitation in England, Part IV," F.D. General B, Confidential 1910, No. 43. N.A.I.
91. Ker, op. cit., p. 183. D. Keer writes that Madam Cama and Aiyer, who were to meet Savarkar reached Marseilles late by a few hours. op. cit., p. 83.
92. *The Bande Mataram*, October 1910. F.D. Conf. B, General 1911, No. 56.
93. M.R. Jayakar *The Story of My Life, Volume I, 1873-1922* (Bombay, 1958), pp. 111-112.
94. *The Mahratta*, 24 July 1910. Native Newspaper Reports, Bombay, 1910.
95. *L'Humanite*, 12 July 1910. Other French papers, *L'Eclair*, *Le Temps*, and *Le Matin*, also denounced the arrest of Savarkar on the French soil.
96. Wallinger to Cleveland, 23 September 1910. H.P.A, April 1911, Nos. 21-69. The reasons for the French police's cordiality were that they themselves were involved in the case and had arrested Savarkar near the docks at the instigation of the British Secret Police. Home Political A, April 1911, Nos. 21-67. N.A.I.



97. Sir Francis Leveson Bertie to Sir Edward Grey, 6 October 1910, Grey Papers, Public Record office, London (Hereinafter reported to in the abbreviated form as P.R.O)
98. Foreign Office to India Office, 2 November 1910. J. and P. Department, F. No. 1032/1910. Earl of Dysart was nominated by the British Government. The French Government nominated Monsieur Louis Renault and Monsieur Le Joukheer and Savarnin Lohman from The Hague and, Monsieur Graham from Belgium Chamber of Commerce acted as the President of the Tribunal. *Ibid.*
99. Secretary of State to Viceroy, 3 October 1910. J. and P. Department, F. No. 1032/1910. I.O.L.
100. Judicial and Public Deptt. F. No. 1032/1910. I.O.L.
101. Crewe to Hardinge, 2 December 1910, Hardinge Papers, Cambridge University Library, Cambridge.
102. Under the terms of the Treaty of Extradition with France, the British Government could ask for the extradition of a person who had committed a crime in their territory and had been convicted and not of a fugitive, who had not been convicted. See *Lee-Warner's Note on Savarkar's Case*, 3 February 1911, J. and P. Department F. No. 778/1911, IOL.
103. Crewe to Hardinge, 20 January 1911, Hardinge Papers. Lee Warner, Under Secretary of State for India, in his note warned the authorities that Savarkar with his perfect knowledge of London and the extremist organisations will be very dangerous so near to London or Paris, on all accounts he is best kept in India." Judicial and Public Department, F.No. 778/1911.
104. Ker, op. cit., p. 183.
105. Indulal Yajnik, op. cit., p. 292.
106. Crewe to Hardinge, 24 February 1911, Hardinge Papers.
107. Hardinge to Crewe, 2 March 1911, Hardinge Papers.
108. *The Frankfurter (Zeitung)*, 25 February 1911. Home Political A, January 1911, Nos. 52 64. N.A.I.
109. Hardinge to Crewe, 2 March 1911, Hardinge Papers.
110. The name of *Hind Bradari* was changed to the *Hindustan Society* in February 1911. However, it was disbanded on 31 May 1911. See F.D., General, Confidential 1911, No, 62.
111. Lajpat Rai, *Young India* (Delhi, 1965), p. 176.

## Paris Indian Society

France, like England, had its own specific role to play. While the free atmosphere of England made it possible for the revolutionary movement to take its early root in a foreign country, France, on the other hand, made a tremendous contribution in opening and widening the area of its appeal in terms of both organisational strength and ideological propaganda. In the land of 'Liberty, Equality and Fraternity', which had become the meeting place of the continental revolutionaries, the Indian revolutionaries had no difficulty in collaborating with the Irish, Egyptian and anti-Tsarist revolutionaries whereby they learnt from them the technique of revolutionary propaganda and method. Thus encouraged and supported by the French Socialists, they were able to bring the case of India's freedom movement before international gatherings. The Indian political problem began to be viewed as part of international issues.

In India, the British could muzzle the press, but the liberty, which the Indians enjoyed in Paris, gave them considerable courage and opportunity to condemn British misrule in India in whatever language they chose to use. They disseminated revolutionary literature, established contacts with continental revolutionary agencies, formulated their schemes and to achieve their purpose in India endeavoured to smuggle arms to India to create open revolution at a convenient time.

With Paris as a safe and secure nucleus of their propaganda work, their activities extended to USA, Japan, Germany and other countries. Their emissaries moved from place to place, much to the annoyance of the British Foreign Office. Their

operations continued ceaselessly till the outbreak of the war (1914-1918) when their activities actually assumed global dimensions.

The Paris Indian Society was an off-shoot of the Home Rule Movement of Shyamaji and was established at the same time in 1905. Its founder S.R. Rana (1878-1957) was also the vice-president of the Home Rule Society of London.<sup>1</sup> While in England, Rana had taken keen interest in the activities of the British Committee of the Indian National Congress, but after he became the vice-president of the Home Rule Society, he severed his connections with the former and also ceased to subscribe to *India*, a publication of the British Committee. He felt that the lines on which the leaders of the Indian National Congress and their Anglo-Indian friends were working upto then had "in no way advanced India's cause, and so far the legitimate demands and aspirations of the people had met with a perfectly deaf ear from the Government who instead of giving any liberty"<sup>2</sup> had curtailed it.

Like Shyamaji, Rana also believed that the regeneration of India would ultimately depend upon the growth of a spirit of national unity amongst the people and that its leaders were expected to endeavour to their utmost to foster this sentiment even at the sacrifice of their own personal principles.

Besides Rana, other Indians who were connected with the Paris Indian Society were Madame Cama, P.D. Mehta, B.H. Godrej, M.P.T. Acharya, H.M. Shah and D.C. Varma. The president of the Society was K.R. Kotwal. The propaganda of the Indians in Paris and England in the beginning was directed towards the creation of unity amongst the different races of India. In their opinion the collaboration of the Indian National Congress with the British government was "slavish, immoral and short-sighted" and its demand to place India on the same footing as the self-governing colonies was "absurd and grotesque to a degree."<sup>3</sup> However, A.O. Hume and William Wedderburn viewed the anti-British campaign of Shyamaji, Rana and others in Paris and England as utterly foolish, since they considered their own line of action against the British government was the only one feasible, under the circumstances then prevailing in India.<sup>4</sup>

The Indians in Paris and England aimed at creating an

absolutely free and independent form of national government in India. In its initial stages, they devoted their activities mainly to the task of acquainting the people of Europe with the real state of affairs in India under the British rule, and to enlist their sympathies and moral support for their political aspirations. This was necessary because there was hardly any awareness of the Indian problem in Europe. Their thinking had been moulded by the propaganda of the British Government. In France, Madame Cama (1861-1936) and Rana established close contacts with the members of the Socialist Party.

With a view to have a better understanding with other socialist leaders of Europe, Madame Cama and Rana left Paris in 1907 to attend the International Socialist Congress at Stuttgart in Germany. As representatives of a subject country, they encountered strong opposition from the delegates of other countries. Though not admitted to the membership of the Congress, they were allowed to attend it. Despite the stern opposition and subsequent "walk out" by Ramsay Macdonald from the Congress, Jean Jaures, the famous French socialist leader and H.M. Hyndman were successful in their attempt to let Madame Cama appear before the delegates and move a resolution on India. The resolution declared that

**the continuance of British rule in India is positively disastrous and extremely injurious to the best interest of India and lovers of freedom all over the world ought to cooperate in freeing from slavery the fifth of the whole human race inhabiting that oppressed country, since the perfect social state demands that no people should be subject to any despotic or tyrannical form of government.<sup>5</sup>**

In view of the strong objections of the British delegates excepting Hyndman, the president did not allow the resolution to be put to vote, but gave Madame Cama permission to express her views before the delegates. She delivered an impassioned speech on behalf of the dumb millions of Indians, who were undergoing a terrible tyranny under the British rule. "Socialism means justice for all", she said, "brother and sister socialists, take up the cause of justice and make it a point to bring India

in front at every socialist Congress.” Continuing, she alluded to the happenings in Russia which were well-known to the people in Europe. “But do you ever try to know our sufferings”, she asked and said

**I have every sympathy with Russia and Poland, so do not misunderstand me. I know their heroic sufferings, but let me tell you the truth, that India’s sufferings are greater. You must pass resolutions for Indians at every Congress.**<sup>6</sup>

Towards the close of her tirade against the British government, she created a stir amongst the audience by unfurling the Indian national flag.<sup>7</sup> She reminded the delegates while waving the flag that she had every hope of seeing the ‘Republic of India’ established in her life-time. This was something unique which had been undertaken for the freedom of the country.

While the resolution was supported by the vernacular papers, it was condemned by others who went to the extent of saying that there was doubt whether the Indian representatives were aware of what they were doing when they appealed to the socialists to aid them in the emancipation of India.<sup>8</sup> Another pro-Government paper regarded it as culpable and disloyal to go to foreign countries and there to hurl denunciations against Britain and her rule in India.<sup>9</sup>

The activities of the Indian revolutionaries were not confined to Europe only. In union with the Home Rule Society of London, Madame Cama paid a visit to the United States which was a tremendous success and gave a great impetus to the Indian national movement in that country.<sup>10</sup>

Paris became an active centre of anti-British activities after the arrival of Shyamaji in August 1907. He continued his campaign against the British government with a free hand, but he still had his paper, *Indian Sociologist*, printed in England.

The oppressive policy of the Government of India convinced the Indians abroad that peaceful agitation had no value. In the beginning Shyamaji did not openly preach violence, but gradually he started advocating it. Savarkar and Madame Cama both believed in the efficacy of violence and the latter especially started advocating the Russian methods. She was of the opinion

that every Indian "must be convinced that if Russian methods" were carried "on in our country rigorously by our oppressors, the so-called British rulers", then it was time that "the Indians should meet it with measure for measure."<sup>11</sup>

Besides the publication of revolutionary literature, some of the Indian revolutionaries were trained under the expert guidance of a "Russian anarchist",<sup>12</sup> who taught them the art of explosives and the best way to utilise it in the revolutionary work. He also gave them an authoritative booklet describing the methods for the manufacture of bombs and their application. Besides the Irish and Egyptian nationals, the Indian revolutionaries were also in close alliance with the Russian exiles in France especially with Vera Figner and Francisco Ferrer and Vladimir Baurtzeff. It was through their mediation that Sarfranski taught Indians the art of making bombs.<sup>13</sup>

The idea behind the training of young Indians was to send them back to India in order to assist the home based revolutionary and secret societies in their aim of overthrowing the British government by violent revolution. Towards the end of 1907 the first batch of three students, Hem Chandra Das, P.M. Bapat and Mirza Abbas, were sent back to India after the completion of their training in bomb-making and in the use of arms and ammunition. Hem Chandra Das went to Calcutta and started a series of bomb outrages which culminated in the Kennedy murder and the discovery of the Maniktola Garden conspiracy. Hem Chandra Das became the bomb expert of the Bengal revolutionary societies and was helped in this work by Ulaskar Dutt. These activities resulted in the conviction of many of the members in the Maniktola Conspiracy Case which virtually broke up the Calcutta branch of the revolutionary movement for some period of time. In Bombay P.M. Bapat started giving instructions in the manufacture of bombs and explosives and the plan to assassinate the political Agent of Kolhapur was conceived. The rapid increase in the revolutionary crimes in India alarmed the Government and they deployed all the resources at their disposal to smash the movement. Aurobindo Ghosh, Tilak and other extremist leaders were put behind the bars. The obnoxious Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1908 was passed which gave the Government

enough powers for speedy prosecution without Jury and prohibited unauthorised public meetings. Despite the restrictions the Government could not stop the changeover of the national movement from the peaceful methods to the use of militant form of pressure tactics.

As a result of the unprecedented prosecutions, a number of Indians left for Europe and joined the Indian revolutionary groups in England, Paris and America. In Europe, the Indian revolutionaries made determined efforts to train a large number of their members in terrorist methods, sending them to work with the Irish, Egyptian and Turkish revolutionaries. Two members, Tirumal Acharya and Sukh Sagar Dutt, were sent to Morocco to work with the Moroccan revolutionaries and to gain experience in guerrilla warfare.<sup>14</sup>

Alongwith the training in terrorist methods, a mass of revolutionary literature was sent to India and other parts of the world, wherever Indians were living. Their main objective was to create anti-British feelings amongst them, especially in the Indian army. These activities of the Indians in Paris and England were not futile; they had their impact on the revolutionary societies in India. The Government of India was alarmed at the continuous flow of revolutionary literature from abroad. Despite the elaborate precautions taken to prohibit its entry into the country, it could not be checked. According to an estimate of the Director of Criminal Intelligence the revolutionary literature received from abroad was influencing the minds of the ignorant peasantry into whose hands it fell. In this way the revolutionary ideas were spreading fast. "We must", he wrote, "aim at destroying the open market in India for imported seditious publication of all kinds. We cannot afford to pick and choose very much according to the degree and quality of the sedition."<sup>15</sup> His report further prompted the authorities to resort to some more restrictive measures. So far as the production of revolutionary literature in India was concerned, it had passed the Press Act in 1910. By the use of the arbitrary powers conferred on the Government by this particular legislation several editors were sent to prison and many presses were closed, but there were hardly any adequate means by which they could completely or even partially check the propagation

of the revolutionary ideas from abroad. The Indian revolutionaries in Paris fully exploited this weakness of the authorities in India and thus they made the despatch of the revolutionary literature in India by all means available to them the sheet anchor of their movement. After the arrest of Savarkar, London had ceased to be an active centre of the Indian revolutionary activities and most of the prominent leaders either joined the Paris Indian Society or left for the continent to explore new pastures. The Paris group then consisted of Shyamaji, Madame Cama, Rana, Aiyer, Chattopadhyaya, Har Dayal, Acharya, Sukh Sagar Dutt, etc. The popularity of Shyamaji in Paris declined with the arrival of other Indians from England, and also on account of his differences with Har Dayal and Madame Cama. Har Dayal regarded Shyamaji as egoistic and far from patriotic.<sup>16</sup> The younger group now completely dominated the scene and started preparing schemes for bringing about a successful revolution in India with the aim of expelling the British.

The main task before them was first to increase their Continental connections and secondly, to expand the scope for instructions being given to their workers in the use of explosives and in military training and to arrange traffic in arms.<sup>17</sup> To come into closer contact with the socialists of Europe, Aiyer and Dr Narayan Krishna, attended the International Socialist Congress on 27 August 1910 at Copenhagen. The *Daily Express*, however, reported that their membership was rejected by the English section because they lacked credentials.<sup>18</sup>

Chattopadhyaya was anxious to convene a conference of the Indian revolutionaries in Paris especially to bring together all the scattered supporters of their party and to formulate a definite policy. In order to make it more effective, the Indian revolutionaries decided to cooperate with the Egyptian nationalists and to hold a joint conference in September 1910. But the French government issued orders banning the Conference.<sup>19</sup> As a result of these orders, the conference was held at Brussels in September 1910 and was presided over by the British socialist leader, Keir Hardie. At this conference the Indian revolutionaries were more bold and frank in denouncing the British government than their Egyptian friends. Madame Cama especially reminded them about the uselessness of the



propaganda and said "What is the use of harping on international legal position of Egypt, but only bombs and revolvers were the proper answer to foreign occupation."<sup>20</sup>

To develop intercontinental connections a number of active members left for different places. Tirumal Acharya was sent to Rotterdam to learn printing and engraving, and later he alongwith Aiyer went to Berlin for the purpose of spreading the propaganda there. Aiyer later went to Pondicherry. Indian revolutionaries in Paris had at first only one paper *Bande Matram* to carry on their propaganda, but in 1909 Chattopadhyaya started another paper *Talvar* from Berlin, the distribution and supervision of which was under Madame Cama. Both these papers now carried on a relentless war against the tyranny of the British Government in India. It was widely broadcast through the columns of *Bande Matram* that in order to achieve independence every nation had to pass through three stages, the first of educating the people, the second of war and the third of reconstruction. "These three stages of every national movement must be passed through. History cannot alter its course for India. After Mazzini, Garibaldi; after Garibaldi, Cavour. Even so it must be with us. Virtue and wisdom first; then war, finally independence."<sup>21</sup>

The programme of active resistance with political assassinations as a prelude to revolution was advocated with splendid earnestness in the columns of the *Talvar*. Minto regarded the *Talvar* as by far the worst production of the sort that he had yet seen. In his opinion the paper was simply a direct instigation to assassination.<sup>22</sup> \*

Another direction in which the Indian revolutionaries then devoted their efforts was to spread the ideas of revolution amongst their countrymen all over the world, since it became difficult to preach the doctrine in India on account of the oppressive policy of the British, who had issued orders for the prohibition of *Indian Sociologist*, *Bande Matram*, and *Talvar*. However, it was known to the Indian revolutionaries that the distribution of their literature among Indian residents outside India was not affected by the repressive measures of the Government and since there were thousands of their compatriots living all over the world, over whom the British had no power

and whose correspondence could not be intercepted by the Government of India, it was decided to devote more attention to this promising field of work.<sup>23</sup>

In spite of the arrest of Savarkar and others in the Nasik and Maniktola conspiracy cases, the policy of assassination of British officers was not totally abandoned. At the time of the Royal Coronation in England, it was decided to pursue it further. Aiyer, who was in Pondicherry, instigated Vanachi Aiyer to take part in this programme and accordingly on 17 June 1911 Ashe, the District Magistrate of Tinnevely was shot at Maniyachi in the Tinnevely District. Commenting on the incident Madame Cama wrote,

**the moral is clear. We have done very well to strike down Englishmen, for we have thus given them fair warning that the inevitable war that lies between them and us has already begun. And we must continue to rejoice each time an Englishman is sent to his doom by some brave patriot.**<sup>24</sup>

Not all the Indian revolutionaries, however, advocated the policy of assassination. There was a divergence of views between Har Dayal and Chattopadhyaya. Har Dayal was in favour of, what he called, direct methods of obtaining Swaraj. He believed in the development of strength of character and disapproved of premature outbreaks and secret assassinations. Chattopadhyaya preferred indirect and devious methods and considered it right to meet strategy with strategy and diplomacy with diplomacy.<sup>25</sup> These differences became so acute that Har Dayal could not pull on well with the others and left Paris towards the end of 1910 to pursue his aim of liberating India by direct methods. After the departure of Har Dayal, Chattopadhyaya (1880-1940) assumed the leadership of the movement in Paris. Besides Savarkar and Har Dayal, he was the most sincere and devoted member of the Indian revolutionary groups in Paris and England. Unlike Savarkar, he was neither extraordinarily courageous nor a firebrand revolutionary, but he had an uncommon intelligence and was adept in making elaborate schemes for the overthrow of the British Government. Under his able guidance the Indian revolutionaries worked in

close collaboration and embarked upon a comprehensive plan for bringing about a revolution in India. Brother of Mrs Sarojini Naidu, Chattopadhyaya was more practical and realistic in his moves. While Savarkar by his dare-devil exploits landed in a British prison, Har Dyal after having drifted from place to place ultimately landed in the United State—he found the place and the people more congenial to his temperament and whom he could mould according to this line of thinking.

The new plan as conceived by Chattopadhyaya was to be carried out on two fronts, i.e. at the international level and in India. As a preliminary, it was decided to carry out propaganda consistently “for a revolution in India in one year or 10 years” on the international front. In this area efforts were to be made to enlist the sympathy of the foreign powers, and especially to obtain the cooperation of the Muslim countries like Turkey, Egypt and Afghanistan for which emissaries were to be posted permanently at Mecca and Karbala. Secondly, it was proposed to preach nationalist ideas to the Sikhs on the Pacific Coast, in Hongkong, and in China, who had till then not been brought actively inside the revolutionary movement.

The next important part of the scheme was that the Indian revolutionaries abroad were to ‘enter into an agreement with Germany with the intention of declaring war on England as soon as news of an outbreak of the revolution in India was received.’ Besides Germany, the scheme enjoined upon the Indians to “make a secret treaty with Japan for the use of their fleet in the Indian Ocean.” Alongwith international cooperation, which was necessary for the overthrow of the British Government in India, the scheme emphasised the necessity of preparing the ground for the propagation of the idea of revolution in India and for this, it was considered essential to win over the army.<sup>26</sup>

The Government of India regarded the scheme as too ambitious, but within a short time they were to realise that the Indian revolutionaries had virtually carried it into execution. From that time onward, every effort was made by the Indian revolutionaries to pursue various aspects of the scheme. For

instance emissaries were sent to Constantinople with a view to employing some Turkish agents to preach *jihad* among the Indian Muslims visiting Mecca and Karbala. To bring about an alliance among Muslim countries Barkatullah, who was in Tokyo, carried on propaganda through the *Islamic Fraternity* and in 1912 also paid a visit to Constantinople for the same purpose.<sup>27</sup> Har Dayal in America was making every effort to organise the movement amongst the Sikhs on the Pacific Coast. Further steps to pursue the scheme included the dissemination of revolutionary literature in all such places where there were Indians and the despatch of arms to India for the assassination of British officials and also to store them for use later on in the event of a general insurrection in the country. Steps were also taken to win the sympathy and support of the labour and socialist parties all over the Continent and to coordinate and organise the work of the Indian revolutionary groups working in Paris, Japan, Berlin, San Francisco and other places. The inflammatory literature which was issued from these places carried their message to the people calling upon them to wage war against the British.

The clouds of war between Germany and England were hovering over Europe and the Indian revolutionaries, who had been waiting for such an opportunity, tried to mobilise their forces to come closer to Germany. In the event of war they knew Paris would not be a safe place to carry on their activities. In the beginning of 1914 Shyamaji left for Geneva and suspended the publication of the *Indian Sociologist*. Chattopadhyaya left for Germany in order to carry out his scheme of international propaganda. On the outbreak of war all the revolutionaries in Paris with the exception of Rana and Madame Cama, had already left for other European countries.

So long as it was merely a question of revolutionary plotting and issuing of inflammatory literature in time of peace, the French Government was content to extend asylum to the Indian revolutionaries in spite of the repeated representations of the British Government. But as soon as France joined Britain in the war against Germany, she readily agreed to British proposal to intern the Indian revolutionaries in France. With the landing of the Indian expeditionary forces in France, the

French Government was also apprehensive of the activities of the Indians. Shortly after the war Rana tried to join the French army as an interpreter with the Indian troops and Madame Cama went to Marseilles and approached the Indian contingent stationed there. Their efforts to instigate them with revolutionary ideas were frustrated by the British Foreign Office, who made strong representations to the French Government against their activities. Sir Francis Bertie, the British Ambassador in Paris, was not happy over the unsatisfactory attitude of the French, especially with regard to Madame Cama, and he emphasised in several representations that the British Government would not tolerate if Cama was allowed to remain at Marseilles and was free to communicate with the Indian troops. The British Foreign Office desired that Rana and Madame Cama should be deported to England. The French authorities sensing the public support for the Indians, however, were not ready to agree to this proposal, but as an alternative decided to intern them in France. The British Foreign Office reluctantly agreed to this arrangement.<sup>28</sup> To further safeguard the Indian troops from coming under the influence of seditious propaganda, the divisions of the Indian army were removed from France.<sup>29</sup>

### References

1. *Indian Sociologist*, March 1905.
2. Rana to Wedderburn, 8 January 1906, Gokhale Papers, F. No. 579-1, NAI.
3. Rana to Wedderburn, 8 January 1909, Gokhale Papers, F. No. *Ibid.*
4. Hume to Wedderburn, n.d., Gokhale Papers, F. No. *Ibid.*
5. *Indian Sociologist*, August 1907. The above resolution was sent by the Indian revolutionaries from Paris before its commencement with the request for the Congress to adopt and pass it on its own. *Ibid.*
6. *Ibid.*

7. The flag was a banner of three horizontal bands. The uppermost was green, the sacred colour of the Muslims, with a line of eight stars emblematic of the eight provinces of India. The centre band was golden hue, the colour of the Sikhs and Buddhists with the *Bande Matram* in Sanskrit. The lower was red, representing the Hindus. See, Foreign Department, External B, Confidential 1911, No. 62.N.A.I
8. *The Parsi*, 1st September 1907, Native Newspaper Reports, Bombay, 1907.
9. *Akhbar-e-Saudagar*, 18 September 1907, *Ibid*.
10. Shyamaji sent not only madame Cama but also Dr. Narayan Krishna on a lecture tour of America with the object of acquainting the people there with the condition of the Indians under British rule. See Chapter III.
11. *Indian Agitator Abroad* (Simla, 1911), p. 27.
12. Stevenson-Moore's note on the Anarchist Movement in the Deccan, H.P.D., April 1909, No. 4. The name of the Russian anarchist was Safranski, who possessed a manual on the manufacture and use of explosives and gave instructions to the Indians in Paris with the object of bringing about a change of rule in India by acts of terrorism. The police suspected that the bomb manual supplied by the Russian was later on cyclostyled by Savarkar and his colleagues and distributed in India. Its copies were found in searches at the centres of early conspiracies in India: J.C. Ker, op cit. pp. 143-44. Rana wrote later that cyclostyled copies of this manual were made in London and a copy of it was brought by Hemchandra Das to India. Memoirs of S.R. Rana: History of Freedom Movement Unit Collection No. R-IV-V-29/2.
13. M.P.T. Acharya "Madame Cama", *The Malhratta*, 19 August 1938.
14. *Indian Agitators Abroad* (Simla, 1911), p. 57. Most probably Acharya stayed in Tangier for about two months and then started back for London with Dutt since it became difficult for them to join the Riffs. H.M. Charged' Affaires Tangier to Grey, 28 August 1909, H.P.B. Dec. 1909, No. 37.
15. D.C.I. note, 24 June 1910, H.P. A, August 1910, Nos. 96 103. N.A.I. (D.C.I. Stands for Director of Criminal Intelligence)
16. Har Dayal to Rana, 11 August 1909, Har Dayal Papers. N.M.M.L.
17. Note by Director of Criminal Intelligence, 21 September 1909, H.P. A, January 1911, Nos. 52 64. N.A.I.
18. *The Daily Express* (London), 31 August 1910.

19. "Memorandum on Anti-British agitation in England, Part I," F.D., General Confidential B, 1909, No. 13. N.A.I.
20. M.P.T. Acharya, "Madame Cama", *The Mahratta*, 12 August 1938.
21. Quoted in Ker, op. cit., p. 113.
22. Minto to Morley, 17 March 1910. Morley Papers. I.O.L.
23. *Bande Matram*, May 1910, H.P. A, August 1910, Nos. 96-103 N.A.I.
24. *Memorandum on Anti-British agitation in England, Part IV*, F.D. Confidential B General, 1911, No. 62. N.A.I.  

The British police suspected that Ashe's murder was instigated by the Indian revolutionaries from Paris, Vide Note on Serious Disturbances and Political troubles in India 1907 to 1917. Home Political Deposit, February 1918, No. 31. Referring to the wave of murders in India Hardinge also admitted that anarchy had taken roots in this country and "we must expect political assassinations now and again. Many of them are prompted from Paris" Hardinge to Crewe, 29 June 1911, Hardinge Papers.
25. *Memorandum on Anti-British agitation in England, Part IV*, F.D. Confidential B General, 1911, No. 62. N.A.I.
26. *Ibid.*
27. Report D.C.I., 23 January 1912, H.P.B, February 1912, Nos. 65:68. N.A.I.
28. Grey Papers, Volume No. 800/56 B.P.R.O. Under this arrangement, Rana was sent to Martinique and Madame Cama was kept at Vicky during the war. *Ibid.*
29. Notes Military Collection No. 425/1914. I.O.L.

## **Indian Revolutionary Movement in USA and Canada**

### *The Pan-Aryan Association*

In their efforts to extend the scope of their activities from the Continent to the United States of America the Indian revolutionaries in the initial stages had to overcome certain handicaps arising from the absence of a clear appreciation of India's colonial situation. Though not downright hostile, the American attitude remained for a time indifferent towards the Indian political problem, an attitude which flowed more from a lack of communication than from anything else.

But once the aims and aspirations of Indians were made known through the agency of the Irish nationalists, the position started changing. There was then no looking back. Despite the anti-Asiatic feelings engendered by the rush of Indian immigrants to the Pacific Coast, the American people began to take keen interest in the activities of the Indian revolutionaries. Some of them even came into the open and joined the struggle on account perhaps of their own anti-colonial tradition, and of the historic suspicion of Great Britain as an exploiter of subject people.

The Indian immigrants, on the other hand, became a positive source of strength in terms of money and man power. On the Pacific Coast and Canada the Indian revolutionaries established within a few years a strong organisation, ready to challenge the might of the British in India. The US official response, no doubt, remained in favour of the British. Even



so, the British Foreign Office had a tough time during the war to convince the US Government about the urgency of putting a check on the activities of the Indian revolutionaries. Its repeated representations had their effect, but by the time the US Government proceeded to fall in line with British suggestions by convicting Indians, an atmosphere of goodwill and understanding had already developed between the Indian revolutionaries and the American people, an understanding which was not to subside.

Before the arrival of the Indian immigrants the contact between the Indians and Americans had been nominal and sporadic. The earliest link was established by the Americans through trade with India towards the end of the 18th century. The merchantmen were followed by the American Christian missionaries, who played a prominent role in the development of American ties with India. On the Indian side the interest in America began with the coming of Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott who founded the Theosophical Society in India in the early seventies<sup>1</sup> of the 19th century. Their visit to India gave a fresh impetus to the study of Hinduism and Indian culture in America.<sup>2</sup>

The relationship between Americans and Indians holding advanced views was drawn closer by the visits of Vivekananda and other religious leaders to America.

The appearance of Vivekananda at the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893, created a new awareness about India. The voice of Swami Vivekananda brought to the Americans a realisation of the unsurpassed religious and philosophical legacy of India. It also began to awaken his own compatriots from the lethargy inculcated by foreign domination.<sup>3</sup> The visit also resulted in stimulating American interest in India and led to the welcome being extended (at least for some time) to Indian students as visitors to America.<sup>4</sup> The educational work carried on by the American missionaries in India also prepared the way for sowing of good seeds in a ready soil, the fruits of which turned the eyes of the educated Indians towards this new world.<sup>5</sup>

When political unrest in India gained momentum after the partition of Bengal and the *Swadeshi* movement, interest in

American political institutions received a fresh impetus and many Indian youngmen went to America, some at their own expense and others on money collected from those who held advanced views. They went to America apparently for scientific and technical education, but to quote the Director of Criminal Intelligence, "they had gone there to learn the manufacture of arms and explosives and to make a special study of the republican institutions and of the history of the struggle which enabled the Americans to throw off the British yoke."<sup>6</sup> Historically and ideologically the Indian students were, no doubt, attracted to America for its revolutionary example in wresting independence.

This became clear with the publication of an article by H. S. Chima, under the heading "Why India sends students to America." The main purpose, he wrote, of the Indian students in America, was to get ideal lessons in an ideal country.

**so that we may deserve the title educated, in the fullest and practical sense of the word. We come here to imbibe free thoughts from free people and teach the same when we go back to our country and to get rid of the tyranny of the rule of the universal oppressor (the British).<sup>7</sup>**

After their coming to the United States, most of the students became members of the *Clan Na Gael* and other Irish societies based in America. At the same time Shyamaji began propaganda for the Home Rule movement in the United States with the assistance of his Irish friends. Articles began to appear in the *Gaelic American*, an organ of the Irish nationalists, with the object of acquainting the American people with the state of affairs in India. The same paper gave a good deal of publicity to the ideas of Shyamaji and forcefully reminded the Indian people that in case they desired to prevent their further decline and demoralisation at the hands of the British, and if they also hoped to revive their former greatness then they should struggle for attaining Home Rule on the lines laid down by Shyamaji.<sup>8</sup>

The paper in a subsequent leader referred to the close cooperation which existed between the Indian and the Irish

nationalists and their determination to carry on their war in alliance with Indian sentiments and sympathy against the common enemy. The writer further pointed out that

so far as the influence of *Gaelic American* extends, it will be its duty to dissuade Irishmen anywhere from entering the services of the British Government in any capacity in India. The interests of all the countries held in subjection by the British are identical, for that reason, therefore, we hold out the hand of fellowship to the Indian people and promise them all assistance it is in our power to afford. India's cause is also Ireland's cause, they must march along the same road, and on the same lines to ultimate victory.<sup>9</sup>

In subsequent issues also, the paper made a point of linking Ireland and India together as two downtrodden countries struggling for freedom and advocated the Russian methods to achieve it. The Government of India regarded the utterances of the *Gaelic American* as outrageous and a direct incitement to Indians to violence and intrigue to overthrow British rule. The Director of Criminal Intelligence recommended prohibition on the entry of the *Gaelic American* in India under the Sea Customs Act, but the Government declined to accept the suggestion as it would give "undesirable publicity to its writings."<sup>10</sup>

In another article, the *Gaelic American* stressed the importance as well as the necessity of the fight for the freedom of Ireland to be carried on in alliance with all those who were struggling against British oppression and decided to adopt the policy of concurrent action with the national movement then in progress in India.<sup>10a</sup>

Besides propaganda through the help of his Irish friends, Shyamaji sent his emissaries on a lecturing tour of the United States to acquaint the American people with the state of affairs in India. Dr Narayan Krishna, a graduate of Cambridge, was the first to go in 1906 to the United States with the object of informing the people of that country about the conditions of the people of India.<sup>11</sup>

Taking their cue from Shyamaji, a few other Indians in the

United States with the help of the Irish nationalists formed the Pan-Aryan Association in October 1906. The founder members were Barkatullah and S.L. Joshi; the former became its President and the latter Secretary. The association had the active support of George Freeman, John Davey and other Irish revolutionaries in the US. The object of the association was to bring India and America into closer contact and to be helpful to the students from India, to educate and send them back so that they could spread liberal ideas throughout the country.<sup>12</sup>

With the cooperation of the Irish nationalists, the association started their anti-British propaganda and in a meeting held in New York resolutions were passed repudiating the right of any foreigner to dictate the future of the Indian people and urged their countrymen to depend upon themselves alone and especially on boycott and *swadeshi*. The meeting also condemned the deportation of Lajpat Rai and Ajit Singh.<sup>13</sup>

Besides the anti-British propaganda, the association advocated the unity between Hindus and Muhammedans and the formation of a league between the peoples of Ireland and India for the overthrow of British rule.<sup>14</sup>

The propaganda had its impact on the educated Americans. They started sympathising to some extent with the Indian national movement and some of them came into the open and formed societies to help Indian students and to give encouragement to their activities. The earliest society formed purely by the Americans was Indo-American National Association in September 1907. The founder was Myron H. Phelps, a Broadway (New York) lawyer. Many professors of American universities were associated with the Phelps's movement which later functioned under the name of Society for the Advancement of India. The main objects of this society were (1) to assist Indian students in America, (2) to present Indian questions to the American press, (3) to secure facilities for Indians visiting America and for Americans visiting India, and (4) to convey the sympathy of Americans to the people of India and to help secure for them from the British Government a measure of self-rule.<sup>15</sup>

Phelps came before the Indian public by contributing a series of letters to the Indian press in which he exposed the

serious defects of the British administrative system and expressed the sympathy of the Americans with the Indian people. He also drew a parallel between the history of America, while still a dependency of Great Britain and that of India pointing out that in America boycott of British goods preceded the revolution and that *Swadeshi* was an American version of the boycott movement in the Indian situation,<sup>16</sup> which he anticipated would lead towards the overthrow of the British Government in India.

In the opinion of *Kesari*, Phelps' letters were a striking reply to the nervous moderate leaders who had been trying to frighten the nation into abandoning the boycott agitation and to sing the praises of their discredited mendicant policy. It advocated the adoption of Phelps' advice and suggested that the boycott movement should be made more stringent.<sup>17</sup>

Besides Phelps, other prominent Americans like W.S. Bryan and Andrew Carnegie also voiced the aspirations of new India and strongly criticised Britain for her policy of self-aggrandizement, and exploitation of the Indian people.<sup>18</sup>

Phelps' purpose in launching the society, as interpreted by the Director of Criminal Intelligence, was to arouse the people in America, India, Ireland and England, by showing them that a united demand for justice was in the offing and if it was repressed, it would be followed by open revolution in India to throw off the foreign yoke.<sup>19</sup>

The movement in favour of India in US received further impetus from the visit of Madame Cama as an emissary of the Indian revolutionaries from London and Paris. Arriving in New York in October 1907, Madame Cama delivered a series of lectures before American audiences, explaining to them the purpose of her visit. "I am in America", she said, "for the sole purpose of giving a thorough *expose* of the British suppression which is little understood so far away and to interest the warm hearted citizens of the great Republic" in our fight for freedom against the British rule.<sup>20</sup> Explaining the aims of the Indian revolutionaries abroad she made it clear that it was to achieve "*Swaraj*; self-government" and to strive for "liberty, equality and fraternity" with the hope of getting it within ten years.

When questioned by a press correspondent as to "how this

mighty overthrow was to come about," she explained, "by passive resistance. We are peaceful people and unarmed. We could not rise and battle if we could. We are preparing our people for concentrated resistance."<sup>21</sup>

In the subsequent meetings, which Madame Cama addressed at the Minerva Club and at the Adams Union Theological Seminary, she asked for the help of the American people for the political enfranchisement of India. Her only regret was that the American people had knowledge about the conditions in Russia, but they had no idea about the conditions in India under the British Government.<sup>22</sup>

It was on account of her visit and her meeting with Barkatullah and Phelps, that both the societies decided to join in 1908 and worked together for self-rule for India.<sup>23</sup>

The ruthless policy of the Government of India to suppress the rising tide of the national movement gradually convinced Indians abroad that it was futile to carry on the struggle on constitutional lines. Madame Cama in Paris and Savarkar in London started advocating violent methods for the attainment of freedom. Their propaganda had a direct impact on the political thinking of the Indians in America. This had already been noticed by the British Consul-General. He reported that the Indians were saying in private that they had been trying for the last twenty-one years to obtain freedom by constitutional means and were now tired of that line and that their difficulty, however, was the same as that of the Irish; they had no arms.<sup>24</sup>

An "India House" similar to that of London, was established in New York where Indian interests were to be concentrated and where Indian students and visitors from India were to find warm welcome and a comfortable room at a moderate cost.<sup>25</sup>

Morley was beginning to sense that a tide of strong public opinion favouring self-rule for India might one day sweep the United States, a tide of the same kind as had swept public opinion in England respecting Austria, Russia and Turkey. He had even informed Minto after receiving reports from Bryce, the British ambassador, who in his turn had some uneasiness in this direction and had reminded that a German Official was sending a story of the same sort to his Government.<sup>26</sup>

Morley's letter to Minto caused considerable disquiet to the Government of India. Their fears were further augmented by the reports of the Director of Criminal Intelligence, who wrote that the United States was becoming a place of refuge for the young revolutionary Indians from the Continent and India. There were various reasons for the flight of the Indian revolutionaries to the United States. According to Ker, personal assistant to the Director of Criminal Intelligence, Europe did not prove to be a conducive place for their activities because there they were treated with suspicion and were not readily admitted in ammunition factories or technical institutions. On the contrary, the United States gave ample scope for the distribution of revolutionary literature which was proscribed in India, while in London and Paris the Indian revolutionaries were kept constantly under the careful watch of the British detectives. Besides in the United States, there were Irish nationalists ready to take up any movement likely to embarrass the British Government.<sup>27</sup> In addition to the above, the Indian revolutionaries had by then awakened the sympathy of a section of the American people and their interest in India flowing perhaps from their own "anti-colonial tradition and historic suspicion of Great Britain as an exploiter of the subject people."<sup>28</sup>

After seeing the alarming reports Minto asked Morley to employ "a good lecturer thoroughly well-up in Indian affairs who could appear on the public platform" in the United States and explain the Government of India's point of view regarding their administration in India. Minto did not favour Morley's suggestion for sending copies of the Government of India's reports to the British Ambassador in America for distribution in that country to counter the propaganda of the Indian revolutionaries.<sup>29</sup>

Though the agitation in favour of self-rule carried on by these two societies gained them the support of the Americans, yet the policy of the United States' Government was still favourable towards British rule in India. President Theodore S. Roosevelt had great faith in the efficacy of British rule and found in the "most colossal example history affords of a successful administration by men of European blood of a thickly populated region on another continent." In his view

**the successful administration of the Indian Empire by the English has been one of the most admirable achievements of the white race during the last two centuries. The mass of the people have been and are much better off than ever before and far better off than they would be if English rule was overthrown or withdrawn.<sup>30</sup>**

These flattering views of the President cheered the British rulers, but discouraged the advocates of the Home Rule movement.<sup>31</sup> Morley was happy on this pronouncement of the President and informed Minto that it had been of undoubted material advantage for them.<sup>32</sup> It is believed that Roosevelt openly praised the British rule in response to the appeals of his British friends.<sup>33</sup> Whatever might have been the reasons, his speech in defence of British imperialism did not go unchallenged. Phelps and other members of the Society for the Advancement of India sent an open letter refuting his views.<sup>34</sup> In India also his speech came under a lot of criticism. The press considered that the American President should have refrained from proclaiming from the house-top one-sided judgement for the enlightenment of the world.<sup>35</sup> Another newspaper commented that while boasting of the philanthropic mission of the Whites, the President had completely or rather deliberately ignored the miseries to which the indigenous races had been subjected by the inroads of the Whites in India.<sup>36</sup>

Both the India Office and the Indian Government took a lenient view of the Indian revolutionary movement in the United States when they came to know of the departure of Phelps for Europe, of Joshi for India and of Barkatullah for Japan in the beginning of 1909.<sup>37</sup>

The departure of these people slowed down the progress of the movement. But the Indian students now thoroughly imbued with nationalist feelings were bitterly opposed to the British rule in India and never lost an opportunity of enlisting American sympathy against the latter. After having come under the influence of the socialistic and revolutionary ideas, they regarded it as their mission in life to work for the subversion of the British rule in India.<sup>38</sup> Besides this trend amongst the student community, the Indian national movement developed



more quickly amongst the Indian labourers who were settled on the Pacific Coast under slightly different circumstances.

### *Indians on the Pacific Coast*

As compared to the students, the Indian labourers who emigrated to America in the early years of the century for economic betterment met with a strong opposition. The emigration of Indians began in the year 1904 and reached a high proportion during 1905-06. In the United States, the Indian emigrants were confined to the three states on the Pacific Coast, viz., California, Oregon and Washington. The Indian emigrants came to the United States indirectly, that is, as a result of discrimination in Canada. Here also they were subjected to the prevalent anti-oriental bias of the Pacific Coast States.<sup>39</sup>

From the very beginning the Indian emigrants met with a strong hostility from the white labourers and in the wake of the economic crisis of 1907 it developed into a widespread anti-Indian movement. Conflicts became common between Indian and white labour, eventually leading to the violent expulsion of the former from the mills at Bellingham in the state of Washington and from other places in the United States.

The British Ambassador was unwilling to intervene on behalf of the Indians. He took pains to explain the difficulties in the way of securing the immunity of these British subjects from interference in their employment or even from violence.<sup>40</sup> While referring to several serious instances of coercion which had been reported after the occurrence at Bellingham he pointed to the inefficacy of diplomatic intervention on their behalf which was seriously "prejudiced both by the relations between the Federal and State authorities" and by the fact that the Treaty of 1818 which regulated the "rights of the British subjects in the U.S." could not be "appealed to on behalf of British East Indians" as it was applicable only to the inhabitants of His Majesty's territories in Europe.<sup>41</sup>

The emigration to America soon, however, fell off as the American immigration policy became one of selection at first, restriction later and finally of exclusion. This was the case especially with the Indian labourers though the United States authorities were quite liberal towards students and professional

and leisured classes. Legally, the Indians were not excluded from entering the United States, but the Emigration authorities devised certain measures by which they could keep the Indians out. Every Indian was put under various tests such as freedom from disease, capacity for self-support, likely to become public charge, which were applied with the deliberate object of deciding against the emigrants in most cases.<sup>12</sup>

However, opposition to Indians was nominal as compared to the anti-Japanese sentiments on the Pacific Coast. At the same time, the conditions of the Indian labourers assumed serious proportions in Canada, where they had also emigrated in 1904. Between 1904 and 1908 about five thousand Indians went to Canada.<sup>43</sup> The basic reason of Indian emigration to Canada was economic : Canada, especially British Columbia with its natural resources and sparse population, offered great opportunities to the Indian labourers. The first group of Indians crossed over to Canada about 1904 from Hong Kong having heard much about the wealth in Canada. On arrival they found bright prospects in the wages then current and sent reports to their relations and friends in India and the Fiji Islands which resulted in a rush to Canada.<sup>14</sup>

The subsidiary causes leading to their emigration in large numbers in subsequent years were that the steamship companies and their agents in India offered cheap transportation to those who were willing to go there. These private companies gave a great deal of publicity in the rural districts of India to the opportunities of fortune-making available in British Columbia.<sup>45</sup> The majority of the emigrants came from the Punjab and nearly seventy-five per cent of them were Hindus from the districts of Ferozepore, Jullundur, Ludhiana, Amritsar and Lahore and some also from the princely State of Patiala. The rest of the twenty-five per cent were Punjabi Mohammadans.<sup>46</sup>

The emigrants mostly came direct from India, but some of them came from Burma, Shanghai, Hong Kong and other places in the Far East, where they had been working as policemen or watchmen. In the beginning, they met with sufficient encouragement. Manual labour was scarce and wages were high in British Columbia and a supply of able-bodied Indians ready to work well for a moderate wage and giving no trouble in the

matter of trade union rules was quite beneficial for the white employers.<sup>47</sup> But soon after working hard when the Indians settled down to a comfortable living, their main troubles started. Their advent was vehemently opposed by the white labour groups, whose hostility was the outcome of the fact that it had greatly affected their chances of employment. They started a campaign of "calumny and vituperation against them." In their anti-Indian movement they were encouraged by the local politicians who were eager to maintain the white labour's vote. The British Immigration Agent, Colonel Falk Warren reported the anti-Indian feelings in Canada and suggested that some provision might be made to meet the situation as strong efforts were on foot by the people in British Columbia to prohibit the entry of the Indians into Canada. His own belief was that it was "very improbable that such a discrimination against British subjects" could be allowed, but in order to avoid the developing crisis he proposed that "immigration from British India might be restricted or regulated."<sup>18</sup> The British Agent's report was followed by a despatch from the Canadian Government who asserted that the presence of Indians excited the Canadian people to fury and it was probable that violence would be resorted to if nothing was done to restrict future immigrants.<sup>19</sup> They showed their unwillingness to perform the disagreeable duty of enforcing the law against their own people and to protect the interests of the Indians in case adequate steps were not taken to prevent their coming to Canada in large numbers.<sup>50</sup>

The Government of India, confronted as it was with the problem of internal unrest and violent agitation and in view of the state of public feeling in India as to the injustice with which Indians were being treated in Canada, the United States and South Africa, were reluctant to take any serious notice of the warning from the Canadian authorities and to restrict Indian emigration to Canada. But the problem of oriental immigration to Canada became so acute that the Canadian Government appointed a Royal Commission in 1908 to report on the matter. The Commission recommended the exclusion or restriction of oriental labour including Indians and considered it a natural desire of Canada to control the immigrants from the orient. Canada's wish to remain "a Whiteman's colony" was regarded

by the Commission "to be not only desirable for economic and social reasons, but highly necessary on political and national grounds."<sup>51</sup>

The Commission particularly referred to the unsuitability of Indians for settlement in Canada on account of their objectionable manners and customs so unlike those of the people of Canada.<sup>52</sup> Before the introduction of any measures, W.L. Mackenzie King, Deputy Minister of Labour, was sent to London in 1908 to discuss with the British Government the problem of Indian emigration to Canada. The outcome of the secret discussions which took place at the India Office was that Morley, Grey and Elgin agreed that a "self-governing colony like Canada" could not "be prevented from making regulations to exclude or restrict Asiatic immigration."<sup>53</sup>

With the tacit approval of the British, the Dominion Government issued orders-in-council in May 1908 prohibiting the landing of immigrants unless they came direct from their country of birth or citizenship or through tickets purchased before starting.<sup>54</sup> Morley sounded Minto about this decision of the Colonial Government who were desirous "in the interest of the empire of avoiding any appearance of social discrimination" and had accordingly decided to insist on this rule which was likely to "render it impossible for any Indian to enter Canada" and requested him to "take all possible steps to discourage efforts at such immigration"<sup>55</sup> from India.

The "continuous journey" order was soon followed by another order-in-council in June 1908 prohibiting the entry into Canada of all Asians other than those who had two hundred dollars in their possession at the time of landing.<sup>56</sup> These orders resulted in creating an effective barrier for Indians to enter Canada since there was no direct steamship service between the two countries and very few Indians could afford to have two hundred dollars in their possession. It is generally held that the policy of exclusion of Indians from Canada "originated through British initiative" and that "the Canadian authorities, with the approval of the British Government in England and possibly with the sanction of the India Office"<sup>57</sup> restricted the immigration of Indians. From the evidence available it seems very doubtful whether the India Office took

any initiative in suggesting the idea of a "continuous journey" clause for the exclusion of Indians. However, it is a fact that neither the India Office nor the Government of India raised any objections to these orders. On the contrary, they "complimented the Dominion Government on the conciliatory attitude displayed by them in dealing with the question of Indian immigration."<sup>58</sup> The Government of India, however, did not agree to the proposal of the Canadian Government for placing restrictions in India on Indian emigration but it gave its unfeigned approval to the Dominion Government to take such measures as were necessary "to restrict immigration into their territories."<sup>59</sup>

The Indian newspapers strongly protested against these laws of Canada and some wrote frankly that "if the Canadians want to debar the Indians from entering Canada, it is highly necessary that they in their turn should be debarred from entering India."<sup>60</sup>

These humiliating restrictions apart, another equally objectionable scheme was devised by the Canadian Government for the deportation to British Honduras of Indians already settled in Canada. However, before the scheme was implemented a delegation of representative Indians was sent to Honduras to study the conditions there. They advised their countrymen to reject the proposal since it was a wholly unsuitable place, "climate and economic conditions being unfavourable."<sup>61</sup> In view of the strong opposition from the Indians, the scheme was dropped.

The harsh treatment to which the Indians were now subjected both in Canada and on the Pacific Coast aroused in them a feeling of resentment against the British Government which apparently was not willing to safeguard their rights as citizens of the Empire. However, it appears more plausible to say that the exclusion of the Indians from Canada and the United States was largely due to the influence of the Home Government and that it was imperial policy to keep the Indians at home in order to prevent them from acquiring ideas of political liberty.

The common need of protection against the hostility of white labour brought the Mohammadans, Sikhs and Hindus from the Punjab and Brahmans from lower Bengal together in

a way that could not have happened in India. The Indian emigrants had not gone to Canada to permanently settle there, but to accumulate money and return to India to free their land from mortgage or to purchase new land.<sup>62</sup> But while living in Canada and the United States, they realised their humiliating position. After having come in contact with free people and free institutions, there dawned in their minds the value of liberty. The burning shame of having been born in a slave country made them appreciate all the more strongly the worth of freedom. Out of their sense of national humiliation and their newly acquired ideas of democracy came a new awakening. This new awakening was further fostered by the preachings of the educated Indians, who had formed a number of societies with the aim of defending the rights of their countrymen as citizens of the British Empire.

The earliest known society, the "Hindustan Association" was established in 1907 by Ram Nath Puri, Tarak Nath Das, Pandurang Khankhoje and others in San Francisco with branches at Vancouver and Astoria. The association brought out a periodical in Urdu *Circular-i-Azadi* (Circular of Freedom). The association aimed at imparting instructions to Indians on national lines and also to teach them the use of arms and other weapons for self-defence and to foster American sympathy with India. The Association looked after the well-being of the Indians, but from its very inception it started inculcating in them the ideas of driving the British out of India by violent means. Several hundred copies of the *Circular-i-Azadi* were also sent to India. However, on account of the opposition from some of its members who did not like the rash methods or such open expression of the means of ridding the people of India of British rule,<sup>63</sup> Puri had to discontinue the paper. Its importation into India had already been prohibited on account of its seditious writings. Besides the lukewarm cooperation from the Indians, the constant pin-pricks from the police forced Puri to leave the United States. He made his way to Japan where he worked with Barkatullah. The work of the Association, however, was taken over by Tarak Nath Das (1884-1958), a young Bengali, formerly associated with the Vancouver branch of the Hindustan Association as its treasurer. With the

termination of *Circular-i-Azadi* Das brought out another revolutionary paper *Free Hindustan*, Das had the requisite training as a revolutionary. While in Calcutta he had taken a prominent part in the political agitation and was one of the founder-members of the *Anusilan Samiti*, a secret revolutionary society. Leaving India about 1906 he first went to Japan and then proceeded in the same year to San Francisco and joined the University of California at Berkeley. In January 1906, he worked for sometime with the United States Immigration Office at Vancouver.<sup>61</sup>

The *Free Hindustan* was in general appearance and tone of its writing quite similar to the *Indian Sociologist* of Shyamaji. On account of its strong anti-British propaganda a representation was made by the Dominion Government to Washington referring to the unfriendly attacks made upon British prestige in a paper published by an interpreter in their employment. As a result of this Das resigned from service.<sup>65</sup>

After his resignation, Das devoted all his time to the propagation of the nationalist ideas amongst his countrymen. A school at Mill Side, New Westminster, was opened where lectures were delivered on subjects connected with unrest in India and the unfair treatment of Indians in Canada and USA. Das denounced fearlessly the repressive measures which the Government of India was resorting to "crush the national aspirations of the people." Like Shyamaji, he also reminded the people that there were two paths open to them: one of eternal servitude to an alien people and a consequent annihilation of their life as a nation and the other of a glorious existence as an independent nation. His only advice to them was to shake off the first and follow the second path.<sup>66</sup>

Under Das's selfless devotion and leadership the constitution of the *Hindustan Association* was revised. Its ambitious object now was to "establish liberty, equality and fraternity of the Hindustan nation" in her "relation with the rest of the nations of the world." All the members of the Association were enjoined to give up prejudices of caste, colour and creed.<sup>67</sup> Like the Indian revolutionaries in London and Paris, with whom Das was in close touch, he also believed in creating a revolution in India, but was not sure whether the people in India had "a

desire and the power to create it." The primary necessity he considered was to arouse national spirit in the mass of the people of India and to "make them understand the need of national independence." He attached more importance to the establishment of revolutionary organisations not only in British India, but all over India. Being more practical in his outlook he regarded the solitary acts of assassination of the British officials as not adequate to attain the goal which could only be achieved by an organised uprising.<sup>68</sup>

The majority of the Indians on the Pacific Coast were slow to fall under the spell of the violent propaganda of Das, they listened more readily to the preachings of his associate Teja Singh, a tireless Sikh leader and secretary of Khalsa Diwan Society established in 1907 with its headquarters at Vancouver, which concentrated mainly on the religious and economic interests of the Sikhs. Another Sikh organisation having similar aims was the Pacific Coast Khalsa Diwan Society formed at the same time.<sup>69</sup>

Teja Singh belonged to Amritsar and had studied at Cambridge and Oxford. He went to England in 1906 and was in New York in 1908. In England, he came under the influence of Shyamaji and Rana and while in New York he associated with Phelps and Bhupendranath Datta. From New York he went to Vancouver with the aim of bringing about a regeneration amongst the Sikhs. In Vancouver, he took part in the labour agitation and was a representative of the Sikhs in a delegation to the Honduras. Through lectures and propaganda in the press, Teja Singh ventilated the grievances of the Sikhs in Canada. After his second visit in 1909 to England he started the agitation against the British more vigorously, and with Das, established an 'India House' at Berkeley.<sup>70</sup>

Another prominent worker in Canada was Gurudutt Kumar who also started publishing a paper *Swadesh Sewak* in Gurumukhi.<sup>71</sup> The paper gave wide publicity to the grievances of the Sikhs arising out of the restrictions imposed on them by the laws of Canada and inspired them to fight for their rights. He was a frank and bold champion of the rights of the Indians



in Canada for which he frequently came into collusion with the authorities.

Despite the various Indian organisations, the conditions of the Indians in Canada began to deteriorate when more stringent measures were introduced. At first the Indians adopted the constitutional policy for the redress of their grievances by petitioning to the Canadian Government. The first petition was sent in 1911. In response to the petitioning policy of the Indians, the authorities responded with more strict laws. The Indians approached the Secretary of State for India and the Viceroy and sent copies to the Indian national leaders with a request to seek the cooperation of the Indian Government for the removal of the restrictions imposed on the British Indian subjects coming to Canada.<sup>72</sup> Besides the laws already in existence, the Canadian Government then decided not to allow the Indians to bring their wives and children from India.

In 1911 a deputation of Indians went to Ottawa to represent their grievances to the authorities but without any success. Later on the deputation came to India also but nothing fruitful came out of it. The problem reached a crisis when the Immigration authorities refused to admit the wives of two respectable members of the Sikh community at Vancouver, Bhag Singh and Balwant Singh. After prolonged negotiations and propaganda the authorities relented and allowed them to land "as an act of grace." Subsequently the attempt at exclusion formed a strong basis for an agitation against the inhumanity of separating husbands from their wives and children. Another factor which increased the discontent amongst the Indians was the lenient treatment which was then being accorded by the Canadian Government to the Japanese and Chinese emigrants as compared to the Indians.<sup>73</sup> But this act of grace did not satisfy the demands of the Indians who actively started taking interest in different associations. This atmosphere provided an excellent opportunity to the political leaders to proceed earnestly to indoctrinate their countrymen with political ideas. The results were soon visible in the large attendance at meetings. In the absence of any coordination between the different associations the political propaganda was not very effective. G.D. Kumar, Tarak Nath Das, Bhag Singh, Balwant Singh,

Hari Chand Suri and Seth Hassan Rahim were some of the active leaders in Canada who were trying to give the movement a definite shape, but they had failed. Kumar had been constantly appealing to the people to forget the nominal distinction, and "be all united into one strong body of the East Indians"<sup>74</sup> but with no appreciable success.

In 1911 the Indian revolutionaries in Paris, while formulating a scheme of bringing about a successful revolution in India, had taken serious notice of the haphazard growth of the movement on the Pacific Coast, where too many societies had sprung up.<sup>75</sup> To consolidate it into a strong movement against the British Government Har Dayal proceeded to America.<sup>76</sup> Besides Har Dayal Indian revolutionaries in Paris also sent Thakur Das in August 1911 to America on a mission to preach revolutionary ideas "amongst the Sikh brothers on the Pacific Coast."<sup>77</sup> Kumar immediately propagated the arrival of Har Dayal, who was on a special mission to organise the Indians. Kumar expected that under Har Dayal the people might be "united into one organisation leaving aside the ideas of provincialism."<sup>78</sup>

Har Dayal landed in the United States in January 1911 and with his arrival began a new chapter in the history of the Indian revolutionary movement in the United States.

#### *Har Dayal and the Formation of the Ghadr Party*

Har Dayal (1884-1939) son of Lala Gauri Dayal, born in 1884 was educated at St. Stephen's College, Delhi, and Government College, Lahore. On account of his distinguished academic career, he was awarded a scholarship by the Government for studying at Oxford, but in 1907 after having come under the influence of Shyamaji's propaganda, he resigned his scholarship saying that no Indian who really loved his country ought to compromise his principles and barter his rectitude for any favour from the alien and oppressive rulers of India. While as a student, a sense of revolt at the dependent position of Indians as a nation had taken deep root in his mind. In England he actively associated with the Home Rule movement of Shyamaji and there blossomed forth as a complete nationalist.<sup>79</sup> He came back to India in the beginning of 1908 and

joined the ranks of the extremist leaders. He endeavoured to spread the doctrine of active hostility to the British by advocating the boycott of the British Government at educational institutions and even asked the young lawyers in the Punjab not to work as pleaders because that also amounted to helping the Government. At that time, the extremist leaders of the Punjab had neither the courage nor the inclination to fall in line with his views. Gradually his anti-British propaganda and writings began to attract the attention of the Government and it was feared that the Government would soon find some excuse for putting him behind the bars, so he decided to leave the country.<sup>80</sup> In 1908 he came to Paris with the aim of carrying on the movement from outside for the emancipation of India and worked with Madame Cama and others for some time. In Paris he edited the *Bande Mataram*, but it appears that he could not pull on well with other Indian revolutionaries, especially Shyamaji, and left for America towards the end of 1910.<sup>81</sup> After his arrival in California, he worked as a lecturer in Indian Philosophy and Sanskrit at the Leyland Stanford University. Although he was doing the work of a regular professor, he did not accept any remuneration<sup>82</sup> from the university. But soon thereafter he left the university, and turned his attention to organising the national movement on the Pacific Coast. While in Europe, Har Dayal had formulated his ideas and thought over the work which he intended to do in America. He belonged to that group of fearless Indians who were struggling to achieve the freedom of their country by organised rebellion and if possible by tampering with the loyalty of the Indian Army. He had been rather too frank in explaining the way in which he wanted to proceed with the object of bringing about a revolution in India and had come in clash with other Indian revolutionaries in London and Paris. A believer in secret or direct methods, Har Dayal could not support the policy of individual assassinations. He observed that "half measures are of no use. They blind the people to the mighty issues that are at stake. We must lay the axe at the root of the tree. The people can never understand the figment of loyalty to a sovereign and hostility to the Viceroy. This is a European conception, which cannot be assimilated by us." He staunchly

believed that it was better to place a clear issue before the people. "Plain speaking," he considered "carries conviction to the heart, while sophistry only perplexes honest men. This is one of the reasons why Congress has failed to appeal to so many people."<sup>83</sup>

Still relying upon his old convictions and ideas, Har Dayal began the difficult task of organising the movement and followed them vigorously and later events showed that he was not altogether unsuccessful in his efforts. After resigning from the Stanford University he went to Berkeley where he established a students' club and delivered lectures with the avowed object of creating in them anti-British feelings. Following the example of Shyamaji he also made efforts to give scholarships to Indian students and widely advertised them in India with the hope of attracting a large number of them to the Pacific Coast.<sup>84</sup>

While Har Dayal was engaged in reorganising the movement according to his ambitious ideas, his presence was immediately reported by the British Agent, W.C. Hopkinson. He considered that of all the political agitators, who had come to the United States, Har Dayal was the most dangerous and it was unfortunate that he had established his centre at Berkeley among the Indian students attending the University of California, where he was bound to wield a great influence on the young. He advised the Indian authorities to utilise the good offices of the United States Immigration Service (Department of Trade and Commerce) to get rid of Har Dayal.<sup>85</sup> With hardly any concrete evidence, Spring-Rice, the British ambassador was reluctant to encourage the representation against Har Dayal to the authorities in the United States. The Government of India though discouraged by Spring-Rice sent some Blue-books to Tilton Steele, an Anglo-Indian Assistant to Hopkinson, for delivering lectures refuting the charges made by Har Dayal in his propaganda.

From Berkeley, Har Dayal applied his mind towards the deplorable condition of the Indian labourers on the Pacific Coast and Canada. During the tour of these areas Har Dayal, accompanied by Khankhoje,<sup>86</sup> delivered a series of lectures. Wherever he went, people listened to him enthusiastically and

his popularity grew rapidly. The restriction imposed on Indian immigration was the main topic of discussion and Har Dayal fully utilised the discontent amongst the Indians generated by these harsh laws against the Government.<sup>87</sup> Gradually Har Dayal won the support and confidence of his countrymen. The two main organisations, the "Hindustan Association" of the United States of America mainly composed of the students and the "Sikh Khalsa Diwan" readily responded to the appeals of Har Dayal and decided to give him their full support. He also contacted prominent leaders in Canada with the aim of organising them under one single party. After having achieved this remarkable success Har Dayal thought of calling a convention of all the Indian revolutionaries abroad in 1914 and expected that the most ardent political workers from India, France, Switzerland and England would attend with a view to formulate a common scheme for the emancipation of India. This Har Dayal could not achieve on account of later developments which made his stay in the United States an impossibility. It appears from the report of the British Agent that in a short time Har Dayal succeeded in winning the cooperation of the main organisations of the Indians on the Pacific Coast and Canada.<sup>88</sup> A meeting was convened at Astoria on 2 June 1913, attended by the delegates representing different organisations from St. John, Portland, Bridel Veil and many other places. In this momentous meeting Har Dayal convinced the delegates about the urgent necessity of organising a single association which could safeguard their interests more effectively. The proposal met with an enthusiastic response and they agreed to the suggestion of Har Dayal to name their association as "The Hindi Association of the Pacific Coast."<sup>89</sup> Further resolutions were passed regarding the working of the Association. The party was to publish its own weekly paper, entitled the *Ghadr*, in memory of the mutiny of 1857. The head office of the Association at San Francisco was to be known as *Yugantar Ashram* or New Era Society. No person was "to get any pay for doing work in the office of the Association or in the Newspaper," however, he was to be given some maintenance allowance from party funds. Every worker joining the party was required to contribute one month's pay towards its funds. No

religious discussions were to be allowed in the meetings of the party and there was to be an annual election of the office-bearers of the party.<sup>90</sup>

The aim of the Association was the overthrow of the British Raj in India and to substitute in its place a national republic based on equality and freedom. The Association wanted to achieve this by an armed national revolution. Every member was declared to be honour and duty bound to participate in the fight against slavery carried on anywhere in the world but especially to crush the British Imperialism.<sup>91</sup>

In addition to the office-bearers an organising committee of most of the founding members and a commission of three persons for doing secret and political work were constituted. The three members were Har Dayal, Kanshi Ram (1883-1915) and Sohan Singh Bhakna (1870-1968). Kartar Singh (1896-1916) Harnam Singh and Jagat Ram were deputed to assist Har Dayal in bringing out the *Ghadr*.<sup>92</sup>

By his devotion and tireless efforts Har Dayal was able to collect sufficient funds for establishing an independent press in San Francisco for the publication of the *Ghadr*, the first issue of which came out on 1 November 1913.<sup>93</sup> The appearance of this paper gave the association its more popular name "The Ghadr Party." The paper from its very inception intended to arouse the national self-respect of Indians by perpetually emphasising the fact that they were not respected in the world as they were not free. The name of the party was changed later to "Hindustan Ghadr Party" to make it clear that the organisation did not advocate revolution in the United States.<sup>94</sup>

Har Dayal's "simplicity, sincerity and sacrifice" bore fruit and within two years he was able to organise the scattered elements of the movement into a powerful organisation. The Government of India gave credit to Har Dayal as the founder of the Ghadr Party, but Sohan Singh Bhakna asserts that "it is wrong to say that Har Dayal was the founder of the "Ghadr Party." He admits, however, that Har Dayal was a prominent member of the party.<sup>95</sup> No one can deny that other leaders in Canada and the US tried to make a common front, but had failed and it was only Har Dayal who brought them together

and placed before them an objective to be achieved by whatever means available.

Even before the formation of the Ghadr Party, Hopkinson had recommended to the Government of India that if it was possible to secure the deportation of Har Dayal, the seditious movement started "by him to bring in other men of his stamp" was likely to be nipped in the bud and would serve as a setback to others who intended to come out to the United States. But the Government of India were opposed to the deportation of Har Dayal, and the Viceroy even dissuaded the Secretary of State from taking such a course of action.<sup>96</sup> But after the formation of the Ghadr Party, and when the Indians on the Pacific Coast had started regarding Har Dayal as a *Messiah* and the only man who could deliver India free from the hands of the oppressor (the British Government),<sup>97</sup> the authorities in England and India considered it a matter of dire necessity to remove him from the scene of action. To achieve this objective they actively employed their secret agents in the United States. Hopkinson had already introduced P.H.E. Pandian in the ranks of the Ghadr Party and it was through him that the proceedings against Har Dayal were initiated by the US Government.<sup>98</sup> All this was done secretly. In the account which was later submitted to the Foreign Office, Pandian mentioned that it was he, who informed the US Government regarding the despatch of the revolutionary leaflets by Har Dayal to India when the bomb was thrown at the Viceroy, Lord Hardinge at Delhi. He further admitted :

**I gave evidence before the Justice of Peace of the United States of America and can boldly say that I was one of the chief instruments in having Har Dayal arrested by the US Government. I gave evidence before the US Immigration Officer that he is an anarchist.<sup>99</sup>**

The Government of India were anxious that after his arrest Har Dayal should be brought to India and that a representation might be made to the US Government through diplomatic channels for deportation. But Spring-Rice, the British Ambassador advised the Foreign Office to refrain from making any

official representation since according to his information Har Dayal had made no secret in his public speeches of his political views and was already marked by the US authorities as a dangerous anarchist and they were contemplating his arrest.<sup>100</sup> India Office agreed to wait on receiving a secret report from Hopkinson who informed them that there was no need for representation as the case of Har Dayal was already "under consideration by Department of Labour in Washington."<sup>101</sup>

Har Dayal had gone to Washington in February 1914 to plead the cause of the Indians personally before the congressional Committee. Har Dayal, however, refrained from appearing before the Committee as he knew that the United States authorities regarded him as an anarchist and in that position his appearance with the other two members<sup>102</sup> of the delegation would "rather injure than help the representation"<sup>103</sup> with regard to the Asiatic Exclusion Bill. The Immigration authorities in San Francisco received the warrant of Har Dayal by the end of February 1914. Hopkinson, who was mainly instrumental in securing the arrest of Har Dayal, wired London that the Immigration authorities had received the warrant for the arrest of Har Dayal as anarchist. Since the US Immigration authorities had promised to keep him in touch with the development of the case, Hopkinson informed them about his own return to Vancouver.<sup>104</sup>

Har Dayal was arrested by the US authorities after his return to San Francisco on 25 March 1914. After two days he was released on bail under a bond of 1,000 dollars.<sup>105</sup> In spite of the public assurances given by the Commissioner of Immigration Anthony Comineth that there would be a fair trial and that the arrest did not mean his deportation. Har Dayal had decided not to wait for the proceedings and fled to Switzerland with the help of the Irish and American sympathisers.<sup>106</sup>

The movement started by Har Dayal had won the support of many Americans who not only attended the meetings addressed by him but even gave him a helping hand by speaking alongwith him in which they inspired the people to rise and revolt against the British just as they had done.<sup>107</sup>

By the time Har Dayal left the United States he and his associates had created a formidable association eager to



organise a rebellion in India. Har Dayal dubbed by Crewe as the most "dangerous scoundrel of the whole party," had lent dignity to the movement and brought about a change in the political thinking of the people. The Government of India regarded Har Dayal as one of the most dangerous but an outstanding revolutionary which India had ever produced and a man who had by his organising activities influenced to a great extent the Indians outside the country, who were burning with a passionate desire to see their motherland free of British rule.<sup>108</sup> This change was the outcome of the incessant propaganda carried on through the *Ghadr* and by its distribution, which now extended to all parts of the world where Indians were to be found. The propaganda of the Ghadr Party had met with an immediate and warm response from the people and within a few months its followers increased both within and outside the United States. Gradually, the party opened its branches in Canada, China, Manila and other places in the Far East. In each issue of the *Ghadr* the emphasis was laid on the necessity of bringing about a violent revolution in India.<sup>109</sup> The *Ghadr* enjoined upon all Indians the duty of boycotting the British Government and of refusing to enter its service. The *Ghadr* was specially intended to appeal to the martial races of India and was posted to the Punjab in large numbers from different places in the United States and the Far East. Alongwith the anti-British propaganda aimed at instigating Indians to revolt, the Ghadr party took extra care to inform public opinion in America about the situation in India and to neutralize British propaganda in the United States and elsewhere.<sup>110</sup> After the departure of Har Dayal the events moved rapidly. The anti-British movement got a fillip from the voyage of the *Komagata Maru*, while the outbreak of the world war in August 1914 gave an opportunity to the Ghadr Party to make a practical demonstration of the Ghadr doctrine which it had been preaching to the Indians all over the world.<sup>111</sup>

#### *The Voyage of Komagata Maru*

After having come under the spell of Har Dayal's propaganda, the Indians in Canada started thinking in terms of challenging the immigration laws of that country which were

creating an unfair distinction between the European and the Indian subjects of the British Government. This realisation became more intense with the arrival of the three delegates, viz., Nand Singh Sehri, Balwant Singh and Narain Singh, who had gone to represent their grievances to the authorities in England and India.<sup>112</sup> The failure of the mission prompted the Indian emigrants to make arrangements for a direct passage service between Calcutta and Vancouver<sup>113</sup> in order to fulfil the conditions laid down by the immigration laws of Canada. The Canadian Government after having come to know about the above scheme of the Indians immediately informed the Secretary of State for Colonies in London that serious consequences were likely to follow if the Indians succeeded in their plan and in that case it would probably become necessary to make drastic amendments of immigration regulations. They further referred to the necessity of preventing an influx into Canada of a race unfitted by their constitutional temperament and habits for permanent residence in that country.<sup>114</sup> The India Office denied having had any information as to the establishment of such communication between India and Canada.<sup>115</sup> After receiving this unsatisfactory reply, the Canadian Government amended their immigration laws and the intimation was conveyed to the Government of India that since the Dominion Parliament anticipated a very congested labour market in British Columbia, it was proposed to prohibit after 31 March 1914 the landing of any immigrants pertaining to artisan, general, or unskilled labour class, subject to a proviso that immigration authorities might admit any immigrant if satisfied.<sup>116</sup>

Unaware of these diplomatic communications the Indian emigrants proceeded calmly with their programme of introducing the shipping service before 31 March 1914, as it was rumoured that the law on the subject of Immigration was likely to be made more stringent after that date. In the beginning of 1914, Bihari Lal Varma went to Hong Kong from Canada to charter a steamer. But he failed in his attempt. Behari Lal, however, inspired no confidence amongst the people both on account of his youth and lack of money to finance any such scheme.<sup>117</sup> In the meantime G.D. Kumar

had been sent by the Ghadr Party to Manila to open a branch there and to carry on the propaganda of the party. It appears that he interested Baba Gurdit Singh (1860-1954), a rich contractor of Singapore, with the idea of chartering a steamer to convey Indian passengers to Canada and America.<sup>118</sup> Gurdit Singh knew about the failure of the scheme of Behari Lal and agreed to undertake the project. Like a true businessman he gave a good deal of publicity to the programme of starting a direct steamer service between Calcutta and Vancouver by Sri Guru Nanak Steamer Company. On 13 February 1914, he published an advertisement for intending emigrants explaining in some detail what his proposals were. In the beginning there was some difficulty in finding a ship, but in March 1914 *Komagata Maru* was chartered from a Japanese firm through Mr A. Bune, a German shipping agent in Hong Kong. To start with, the Hong Kong authorities deliberately delayed the departure of the ship. The reason was that they wanted to prevent the vessel from proceeding since it was anticipated by them that the passengers would not be admitted into Canada.<sup>119</sup> Legally the authorities were powerless to stop the ship from sailing and after negotiations, Gurdit Singh got the permission to sail on 4 April with 165 passengers. On the way 111 passengers were taken at Shanghai, 86 at Meji and 14 at Yokohama and the *Komagata Maru* sailed for Vancouver with 376 passengers.<sup>120</sup> The Government of India viewed the departure of the ship as a deliberate attempt by the Indians to challenge directly the legality of the Canadian immigration laws and in their opinion they should not have left in a body at a time when the Canadian Government had declared that it did not want any more labourers or artisans.<sup>121</sup> As compared with the official attitude, the public was asking: "But what about the right of Indians as British subjects?" and newspapers like the *Tribune* hoped that they would not be summarily turned back. Such an exclusion in the opinion of the paper was likely to create trouble for the Government. The time had come, the paper continued, for the Government of India to intervene on behalf of the people and secure not only their landing, but also the removal of an indefensible prohibition.<sup>122</sup> The Government of India preferred "to have

the immigrants rejected by Canada than to exercise any control,"<sup>123</sup> as they were powerless to do so under the existing rules. While on the way, Gurdit Singh cheered the passengers by saying that "we are going to have a test case. The Canadian Government can never send us back because we are English subjects, and if it does send us back that will have a very bad effect upon India."<sup>121</sup>

On its way to Canada the emissaries of the Ghadr Party encouraged the passengers and distributed copies of the *Ghadr* at Shanghai, Shimonosaki (Meji) and Yokohama and at the last named port the ship was visited by Bhagwan Singh and Barkatullah and the former delivered a spirited address to the passengers advising them to rise against the British Government.<sup>125</sup> As expected, when the ship reached Vancouver on 21 May 1914, the Canadian Government refused to allow the immigrants to land. The main question before the Indians now at stake was not that Canada had a legal right to exclude anybody, but whether British citizenship carried with it the right of free entrance to any part of the Empire.<sup>126</sup>

The unjust refusal of the Canadian Government to permit the Indian immigrants to land was keenly resented both by the passengers and their countrymen in India and abroad. Public meetings were held not only on the ship and in Canada, but also in India to condemn the highhanded policy of the Canadian Government. The Indians at Vancouver also formed a committee with a view to helping the passengers and for creating facilities for their landing but with little success. *Desh* of Lahore reminded the Indians that it was their duty to "protest against such injustice and oppression," and appealed that "every town and village in India should hold meetings to call the attention of the Government to the affair."<sup>127</sup>

Alongwith the protest meetings the passengers on the *Komagata Maru* also considered it preferable to fight legally. They approached the Canadian Court of Law and lodged an appeal in the name of Mansa Singh. The judicial authorities at Victoria tried it as a test case on which to decide the fate of all.<sup>128</sup> It was apparent that neither the Canadian Government nor the people were willing to allow any more Indians into their country and even before the Indians took their case to the

Court, there was a strong movement in Vancouver amongst the local people to send by force the *Komagato Maru* with its passengers back to India, as it was feared that the Court's verdict might go in their favour.<sup>129</sup> Perhaps sensing the temperament of the people the case of Mansa (Munshi) Singh was rejected by the Court. In addition, the Canadian authorities raised another objection about the payment of the charter money.<sup>130</sup> The necessary amount was immediately collected by the Indians in Canada and the Charter was transferred to the names of Bhag Singh and Husain Rahim. The orders of deportation passed by the Canadian Court on all the passengers further gave a mortal blow to the rights of Indians, and in the protest meetings the Indians made it clear to the authorities that by ill-treating them they were rendering a great disservice to the British Empire.<sup>131</sup> Lajpat Rai also hinted in a letter dated 30 June 1914 that on account of these orders passed on the *Komagata Maru* passengers "we are on the threshold of a great agitation amongst the Indians."<sup>132</sup> The *Tribune* of Lahore warned that if a whole body of nearly 400 passengers were turned back, "the position of the Indians would be known definitely and it was after all proper to know one's status." The paper anticipated that probably after the return of the Indians, they would "consider whether they were satisfied with their lot and if not what they would do to deserve better."<sup>133</sup>

The Government of India did not attach any significance to these warnings. The India Office cared less and dismissed the issue by saying that the enterprise had been "financed by the Indian agitators for political purposes in India."<sup>131</sup>

After prolonged but fruitless negotiations between the passengers and the Canadian authorities, the *Komagata Maru* left Vancouver on 23 July for Hong Kong. The affair cost the passengers enormously and the sufferings of those on board, who were refused even provisions and water, were immense. For about two months, the passengers underwent all sorts of miseries at the hands of the Canadian authorities and at the time of leaving Gurdit Singh sent a telegram which was published in the *Japan Times* warning the British Government that they would make it impossible for them to maintain their

rule in India<sup>135</sup> after such treatment of the Indians. But at Yokohama, Gurdit Singh was informed by the Hong Kong authorities that they would not allow the landing of the passengers and mentioned their decision to enforce the local vagrancy ordinance against any "who might attempt to land at that port."<sup>136</sup> This order further inflamed the anti-British feelings of the passengers and when they diverted the ship towards Calcutta they were inspired with the single determination to end British Imperialism and work for their country's honour and freedom. In their view a Government which made the *Komagata Maru* incident possible had no moral right to exist.<sup>137</sup> The Ghadr Party supplied the passengers with money and arms. The beginning of the programme for bringing about a revolt in India had been made.<sup>138</sup>

The Government of India was aware of the turbulent feelings of the returning passengers and in the beginning of August 1914 had fully armed themselves with special legislation and powers to keep the situation under control. The Ingress into India Ordinance of 1914 which was passed immediately empowered them to restrict the liberty of any person entering India after 5 September, if such action was considered necessary for protecting the state.

The *Komagata Maru* arrived at the mouth of Hooghly at the end of September. Under the above ordinance, the luggage of each passenger was examined and they were directed to disembark and proceed to a special train which was in readiness to convey them to their respective places in the Punjab. Instead of obeying these orders, the passengers started marching towards Calcutta with the intention of depositing a copy of the Granth Sahib at the Sikh Gurdwara and to make a representation to Government. But they were stopped by the British police near Budge Budge. Resenting this there ensued a fight between the two parties which resulted in the killing of nearly twenty Indians while the loss of life on the Government side was only two British and two Indian policemen. During the night following the riot many Indians escaped to the neighbouring villages while others were arrested and Gurdit Singh himself disappeared and came to the notice of the authorities only at the end of the war.

This incident aroused the public feelings especially in the Punjab against the highhanded policy of the Government. In order to appease the public but in reality to whitewash the doings of the Canadian authorities and the officials at Budge Budge, the Government of India appointed, in October, a Committee of Enquiry to look into the circumstances of the voyage and the landing at Budge Budge of the *Komagata Maru* passengers. But privately Hardinge informed Crewe that the main advantage of the enquiry would be that it would elucidate the fact that the Sikhs behaved very badly.<sup>139</sup> Despite the enquiry, the series of calamities which fell to the lot of the Indians on the *Komagata Maru* had a tremendous impact on the revolutionary movement in India and abroad. The Ghadr Party had already been urging their countrymen to return to India and overthrow the oppressive Government; now this incident served as a powerful stimulus to the propaganda already at work among them.<sup>140</sup> The Director of Criminal Intelligence also noted in May 1914 that the rapid discontent among the Sikhs and other Punjabis on the Pacific Coast was one of the worst features in the present political situation. The leaders, he commented had thrown the entire blame for 'the failure of the venture upon the one-sided policy of the British Government in India who had shown no interest in the welfare of the Indians in the British colonies.<sup>141</sup> Shiploads of Indians started towards India in the trail of the *Komagata Maru* with the single object of overthrowing the British Government. In fact the repeated indignities which had been heaped upon the Indians in Canada as well as the humiliation which they received on their arrival in India contributed towards the sapping of the loyalty of the Sikhs in the Punjab.<sup>142</sup> The Sikhs who for years past had regarded themselves as specially favoured community indispensable to the "British Raj" had begun to have some doubts. When the Budge Budge riot occurred and a number of *Komagata Maru* passengers were shot and others arrested and put in jail under the Ingress into India Ordinance, the idea was for a time prevalent that the Government was actually biased against the Sikhs. This state of feelings amongst the Sikhs was viewed by the Punjab Government as "particularly unfortunate in view of the number of"<sup>143</sup> Indians who were then on their way back

to India. The declaration of war in August 1914 and this incident helped the Indian revolutionaries to make preparations for a revolution in India for the overthrow of the British Government.

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2. V. Chirol, (*Indian Unrest*), (London, 1910), p. 28.
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4. Note on Serious 'Disturbances and Political Trouble in India 1907-1917. Home Political Deposit, February 1918, No. 31. N.A.I.
5. Commerce & Industry Deptt., Emig. B, March 1913, Nos. 31-34. N.A.I.
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7. British Consul Laidlaw to Foreign Office, 26 June 1907. F.D. S.E., March 1908, Nos. 595 600. N.A.I.
8. Quoted in F.D., S. I, July 1906, Nos. 55-56. N.A.I.
9. *ibid.* The Irish nationalists who were championing the cause of Indians in the USA were George Freeman, the editor of the *Gaelic American* and John Davey of the *Clan na-Gael*.
10. *ibid*
- 10a. *The Gaelic American*, 9 December 1905, Home Public Deposit, Dec. 1906, No. 129. N.A.I.
11. Encl: British Consul Laidlaw to Foreign Office, 26 June 1908, Foreign Deptt.. Secret External, March 1908, Nos. 595 600. N.A.I.
12. Note on the Pan-Aryan Association, Foreign Department, Secret Internal, February 1910, Nos. 56-59. Both Joshi and Barkatullah were known to Shyamaji. The name pan Aryan was selected with a view to include some Persian students who were then studying in New York. *ibid.* Another association which existed at that time was the Indo-American Association formed by G.N. Mukerjee, M.C. Sinha and other students at Oregon, but not much is known about its



- activities. Home Public Deposit, Dec. 1906, No. 129. N.A.I.
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  14. *The Ghadr Directory* (New Delhi, 1934), p. 16.
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  23. Report of the C I.D. on *Indian Unrest*, p. 149, IOL.
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  25. *History-Sheet of Myron Phelps*. Home Political Deposit, October 1910, No. 17. N.A.I.
  26. Morley to Minto, 23 April 1908, Morley Papers. Bryce also informed the Foreign Office that there were "Hindus in American cities hatching treasonable and dangerous plots." Bryce to Foreign Office, 21 July 1909, Foreign Department, Confidential B, General, 1910, No. 13. N.A.I.
  27. J.C. Ker, *Political Trouble in India 1907-1917* (Calcutta, 1917), p. 219.
  28. Guy Hope, *America and Swaraj: The US Role in Indian Independence* (Washington, 1968), p. 11.
  29. Minto to Morley, 12 August 1908, Morley Papers. I.O.L.
  30. Speech by President Roosevelt delivered at the Metropolitan Methodist Episcopal Church on 18 January 1909. Home Political Deposit, October 1910, No 17.

Other Americans, especially Sherwood Eddy said "what would happen if Great Britain left India today ? India would welter in blood, with hopeless internal wars"; yet others sympathised with the Indian national movement. For details about the different shades of opinion about India see *Some American Opinions on the Indian Empire* (London, 1915) and *Some American Opinions on British Rule in India*, published by the Indian Nationalist Committee (Stockholm, 1919).

31. Guy Hope, op. cit., p. 6.
32. Morley to Minto, 4 February 1910, Morley papers, I.O.L.
33. Diwakar Prasad Singh, "American Official Attitude Towards the Indian Nationalist Movement, 1905-1929" (Thesis, University of Hawaii, 1964, Microfilm). This is confirmed by the correspondence which passed between Roosevelt and other British officials and especially Morley. Morley talked to Whitelaw Reid, the American Ambassador in London, about pro Indian developments in America and got it conveyed to President Roosevelt through Sydney Brooks that he (Roosevelt) should say something in public so that the British policy in India might be put before the Americans in proper light. Roosevelt to Sydney Brooks, 28 December 1908, quoted in Manoranjan Jha *Civil Disobedience and After—The American Reaction to Political Developments in India during 1930-1935* (Delhi, 1973), pp. 9-10. For further details about this aspect see Elting E. Morison, *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt* (Cambridge, 1952), Vol. 6.
34. "History-sheet of Myron H. Phelps" see also the "Open Letter to Theodore Roosevelt." Home Political Deposit, October 1910, No. 17. N.A.I.
35. *Gujarati*, 24 January 1910. Native Newspaper Reports, Bombay, 1910.
36. *Shakti*, 23 January 1910. *ibid.*
37. *Indian Agitators Abroad*, p. 139. Joshi belonged to an Indian state and on the representation made by the British Government, he decided to leave the United States and came back to India where he tendered an apology for having associated with the Indian revolutionaries there. Foreign Department, Secret International, February 1910, Nos. 56-59. N.A.I.
38. R.H. Bruce-Dickson to Secretary of State, for Foreign Affairs, 8 March 1910. Foreign Department, General B, June 1910, Nos. 9-12 N.A.I.
39. Gary R. Hess, "The Hindu in America : Immigration and Naturalization Policies in India 1917-1946," *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. XXXVIII, 1969, p. 60.

40. Bryce to Edward Grey, 14 October 1907. Judicial and Public Department, F No. 821/1907, IOL.
41. *ibid.*
42. Note by C E. Low, 14 July 1916. Commerce and Industry, Emigration A, November 1916, Nos. 1-16. The total exclusion of the Indians was accomplished by the Immigration Law passed in February 1917.
43. The returns of the Immigration Department show that the flow of Indians from India to Canada was as follows :
- |                          |       |
|--------------------------|-------|
| June 1904 to June 1905   | 45    |
| June 1905 to June 1906   | 387   |
| June 1906 to March 1907  | 2,124 |
| March 1907 to March 1908 | 2,623 |
- Vide W.L. Mackenzie King, "Oriental Immigration to Canada." US Department of Justice Records, Roll No. 1. See also Commerce and Industry Deptt. Immigration A, October 1913, Nos. 31-33. N.A.I.
44. W. Hopkinson's "Report on Hindu Affairs in Canada." US Department of Justice Records, Roll. No. 1. N.A.I.
45. Mackenzie King, *op. cit.*
46. Dady Burjar to W C. McPherson, 30 January 1914, Commerce & Industry Department, Immigration A, December 1914, No. 4, N.A.I.
47. India Office Memorandum on Indian Immigration into Canada, 26 Aug. 1916. Commerce & Industry Department, Emigration Filed and Indexed, October 1915, No. 68. N.A.I.
48. Colonel F.A. Warren to Govt. of India, 22 November 1906. Commerce & Industry Department, Emigration A, May 1907, Nos. 7-29. N.A.I.
49. Notes. Commerce and Industry Department, Emigration A, February 1908, Nos. 18-33. N.A.I.
50. Viceroy to Secretary of State, 22 Jan. 1908. *ibid.*
51. Report of Mackenzie King on "Oriental Immigration to Canada," 2 May 1908. Commerce & Industry Department, Emigration A, July 1908, Nos. 15-19. Morley while discussing the Indian immigration controversy considered it as the most hopeless in the world and "no wonder that the Indian who is a sensitive animal, hates the action of the colonies, but it is no wonder that the colonies insist on remaining white." Morley to Minto, 12 November 1908, Minto Papers. National Library Edinburgh.
52. Report of Mackenzie King, *op. cit.*

53. Secretary of State to Viceroy, 25 March 1908. Judicial & Public Department, F.No. 1235/1913. I.O.L.
54. India Office Memorandum on Indian Immigration into Canada," 26 Aug. 1915. Commerce and Industry Department, Emigration Filed and Indexed, October 1915, No. 68. N.A.I.
55. Secretary of State for India to Government of India, 19 June 1908, Commerce & Industry Department, Emigration A, July 1908, Nos. 15-19. N.A.I.
56. "India Office Memorandum on Indian Immigration into Canada", 26 Aug. 1915, Commerce & Industry Department, Emigration Filed and Indexed, October 1908, No. 68. Baba Gurdit Singh holds that this innocent provision was cleverly explained to be merely in the interest of the immigrant adventurer who, for the sake of prudence, should have something to fall back upon so as not to be left stranded on a foreign shore. Baba Gurdit Singh, *Voyage of Komagata Maru* (Calcutta, n.d.), p. 10.
57. K.K. Banerjee, *Indian Freedom Movement, Revolutionaries in America* (Calcutta, 1969), p. 3.
58. Notes. Commerce & Industry Department, Emigration B, June 1910, Nos. 14 15. N.A.I.
59. Viceroy to Secretary of State, January 1908, Judicial & Public Department, F.No. 1235/1913. I.O.L.
60. *Bombay Samachar*, 6 June 1909. Native Newspaper Reports, Bombay, 1910.
61. "Memorandum on matters affecting East Indian Community in British Columbia" by Colonel E.J.E. Swayne. C & I. Department, Emigration A, May 1909, No. 13. N.A.I.
62. *ibid.*
63. Walter R. Hearn (British Consul-General, San Francisco) to Grey, 20 April 1908. Commerce & Industry Department, Emigration B, July 1908, Nos. 5-6. N.A.I.
64. *Indian Agitators Abroad* (Simla, 1911), p. 47.
65. "Memorandum on Matters Affecting the East Indian Community in Canada." C. & I. Department, Emigration A, May 1909, No. 13.
66. "History-sheet of Tarak Nath Das", C. & I. Department, Emigration B, March 1912, Nos. 31-44. N.A.I.
67. See Rules and Regulations of the *Hindustan Association*. C&I Department, Emigration B, May 1911, Nos. 4-5. N.A.I.
68. *Free Hindustan*, March-April 1910.

69. Rajni Kanta Das, *Hindustani Workers on the Pacific Coast* (Berlin, 1923), p. 89.
70. *Indian Agitators Abroad* (1911 Simla,) pp. 169, 179.
71. Notes Home Political A, April 19, No. 18. The first issue of the paper was brought out on 1 February 1910. N A.I.
72. Copy of the Petition sent to Earl of Crewe, 25 April 1911. C. & I. Department, Emigration B, September 1911, Nos 4-7. See also F. No. 279, Gokhale Papers – A copy of the petition was sent to Gokhale also.
73. F.C. Ismonger and J. Slattery, *An Account of the Ghadr Conspiracy* (Lahore, 1919), pp. 4-5, IOL.
74. "The Span of Life," March 1912, Foreign Office 275/1912, PRO.
75. Besides the societies already mentioned earlier there were Association for the Promotion of Education of the People of India and *Hindustan Club* at Seattle composed of students. At Portland there were Bharat Sewak Sabha and United India League, with the main purpose of bringing about the social and political regeneration of Indians by constitutional means. *Ibid.*
76. The need for a capable leader had been communicated by Das to his friends in Paris. Das had suggested Ajit Singh, while the Indian nationalists sent Har Dayal. Ker, op cit., p. 234. Har Dayal had also made up his mind while in Algiers to go to America as he could not carry on cordially with others in Paris. Har Dayal to Madame Cama, 21 May 1910, *Har Dayal Papers*. NMML.
77. *Indian Agitators Abroad* (Simla, 1911), p. 171, IOL.
78. *The Span of India*, March 1912; No. F O 275/1912 P.R.O.
- In the opinion of Director of Criminal Intelligence, before the coming of Har Dayal, there was no dangerous organisation of Indian revolutionaries on the Pacific Coast, but he anticipated that the great many of the Indians who were dotted about in various places there entertained extremely revolutionary ideas which might at any time culminate in desperate enterprises in India on the part of the individuals, if they were organised by a capable leader. D.C.I. to India Office, 9 Aug. 1911, Home Political Deposit, August 1911, No. 17. N.A.I.
79. *Indian Agitators Abroad* (Simla, 1911), p. 70.
80. Lajpat Rai, *Young India* (New Delhi, 1965), p. 167.
81. See Har Dayal's correspondence with Rana 1909-10, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi.
82. A.Carnegie Ross, British Consul-General San Francisco to Mitchell

- Innes, Charge d'Affaires, The British Embassy Maine, 21 Sept. 1912. Commerce & Industry Department, Emigration B, February 1913, Nos. 28-32. N.A.I.
83. Extract from the letter of Har Dayal quoted in Ismonger and Slattery, op. cit., p. 1 See also Har Dayal, *A Sketch of Complete Political Movement for the Emancipation of India*, Har Dayal Papers. N.M.M.L.
84. W.C. Hopkinson to W.W. Cory, Deputy Minister of the Interior, Ottawa, 5 Nov, 1912, C. and I. Department, Emigration B, February 1913, Nos-28-32. Funds for the scholarship were provided by Bhai Jawala Singh, a wealthy farmer and six Guru Gobind Singh scholarships were announced in Indian newspapers.
85. Hopkinson to Foreign Office, 21 January 1913. Home Political B, June 1913, Nos 5-17. N.A.I.
86. Home Political Deposit, March 1921, No. 69. N.A.I. At that time Khankhoje was vice-president of the Hindustan Association of United States of America, which mainly looked after the interests of the Indian students and was later obscured by the activities of the Ghadr party. *ibid.*
87. Ismonger and Slattery, op. cit., p. 8.
88. Hopkinson to Foreign Office, 17 February, 1913, Home Political B, June 1913, Nos. 5-17. N.A.I.
89. Ismonger and Slattery, op. cit., p. 13 Other prominent workers who attended this meeting were Thakur Das, Ram Chandra Peshwari, Pandit Kanshi Ram, Sohan Singh Bhakna, and Nawab Khan. Sohan Singh Bhakna gives the date of the meeting as 13 March 1913. See the "Statement of Sohan Singh Bhakna" History of Freedom Movement, File No. 21/2, N A.I.
90. *Statement of Sohan Singh Bhakna*, op. cit.
91. Randhir Singh, *Ghadr Heroes* (Bombay, 1945), p. 9.

After the passing of the resolutions, the election for the main workers of the Association was held and the following were elected :

President	Sohan Singh Bhakna
Vice President	Kesar Singh Didha
General Secretary	Har Dayal
Treasurer	Pandit Kanshi Ram
Vice-Treasurer	Harnam Singh
Organising Secretaries	Karim Bakhsh and Munshi Lal
Joint Secretary	Thakur Das.

Statement of Sohan Singh Bhakna, op. cit.

92. Randhir Singh, op. cit., p. 9.

93. The very first issue of this paper reflected the ideas of Har Dayal. In an article "our name and work," it explained "What is our name? Mutiny (Ghadr). Where will the mutiny break out? In India. When? In a few years. Why? Because people can and are ready to fight and die for freedom." There was no secret about the aims and objects of the *Ghadr*, the sub title of which declared it to be the "enemy of the British Government." Home Political Deposit, Octo-1915, No. 43. N.A.I.
94. Mark Naidis, "Propaganda of the Ghadr Party," *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. XX (1951), p. 261.
95. *Statement of Sohan Singh Bhakna*, op. cit.
96. Home Political B, June 1913, Nos. 5-17. The Government of India was against this move because under the Immigration laws Har Dayal would be deported to the last place of residence (Martinique) and not to India. *ibid.*
97. Hopkinson to Foreign Office, 13 February 1914. Foreign Office, No. 371/2152/1914 P.R.O. Hopkinson was a Police Inspector at Calcutta, before he came to Canada in 1907. Later on he was employed by the Department of the Interior in Canada and was also an agent of the British Government and used to send reports about the activities of the Indian revolutionaries. He was killed by Mewa Singh. See Home Political A, January 1915, Nos. 3-6. N.A.I.
98. The proceedings against Har Dayal were initiated after Hopkinson received assurance from the Assistant Commissioner of Immigration that if the former was able to prove that "any of the Hindu students in the US" was an anarchist then the Immigration authorities would take action. See Hopkinson's report, Home Political B, June 1913, Nos. 5 17. N.A.I.
99. Pandian to the British Ambassador, 5 November 1915. Foreign Office, 371/2784/1916. The other British Agent A. Tilton Steele also informed Spring-Rice that we succeeded in moving the Immigration authorities in San Francisco to deport one of the chief leaders, Har Dayal of Stanford University See Foreign Office, 115/2068/1916. PRO Even Har Dayal attributed his arrest to British influence. See Ker, op. cit., p. 238.
- 100 Spring-Rice to Grey, 9 February 1914. Foreign Office; 371/2152/1914. The American authorities regarded Har Dayal as out and out anarchist, "who believed not only in revolution in India, but revolution everywhere, he believed in a combination and consolidation of all the anarchist forces in the entire world for the purpose of social industrial and all kinds of revolutions of the rankest character." Trial records, p. 12. By his revolutionary speeches, Har Dayal came within the purview of the expulsion provisions of the Immigration laws

of the United States. "Memorandum on Indians in America," US Department of Justice Records Roll No. 1. The evidence needed by the US authorities was given by both Pandian and Steele as mentioned earlier.

101. Hopkinson to Foreign Office, 13 February 1914. Foreign Office, 371/2152/1914. P.R.O.
- Don Dighan, however concludes on the basis of British Foreign Office papers that action against Har Dayal was taken by the American officials independently. Don K. Dighan, "The Hindu conspiracy in Anglo-American Relations during World War I." *Pacific Historical Review.*, Vol. XL 1971. p. 61.
102. The other two members were Dr Sudindra Bose and Dr Bishan Singh.
103. Hopkinson to Foreign Office, 19 February 1914. F.O. 371/2152/1914. P.R.O.
104. *ibid.*
105. The bond was furnished through the United States Fidelity and Guaranty Company of Baltimore, Maryland. Spring-Rice to Grey, 7 May 1914. *ibid.*
106. Har Dayal had an inkling that he would not be allowed to carry on his anti-British activities in America for long and in a meeting on 31 December 1913 had informed his countrymen that "if I am turned out of this country, I can make preparations for the mutiny in any other country. Our Ashram and our arrangements are so complete that the Ghadr work will not be stopped by my leaving the country. I shall have to go to Germany to make arrangements for the approaching Ghadr." *The Ghadr*, 7 April 1914. Samras believes that it was through the influence of William Jennings Bryan that Indian revolutionaries whisked away Har Dayal to Europe. *The Maharatta* 16 September 1938.
107. In one of the meetings an American asked Har Dayal about the population of India which the latter replied was about 30 crores. "How many Englishmen are there," asked the American. "About 1½ lakhs," replied Har Dayal. The American then remarked that this small number of Englishmen could be driven out of the country with stones without difficulty. Har Dayal admitted this fact and added that Indians were gradually becoming conscious of their power. Ismonger and Slattery, op. cit., p. 25.
108. "History Sheet of Har Dayal." Home Political F.No. 28/7/1938. N.A.I.
109. See "Memorandum on the Indian Revolutionary Activities in the United States." US Department of Justice Records, Roll No. 2, N.A.I.



110. See pamphlets by R. Chandra, i.e., "Exclusion of Hindus From America and, "India Against Britain" (November 1916 U.S.A.).
111. In the beginning, the *Ghadr* was issued weekly in Urdu and Gurmukhi. In May 1914, a third edition of this paper started in Gujarati. In 1915, a Hindi edition of the paper was also brought out. After Har Dayal, Ram Chandra became its editor. Besides the *Ghadr*, the other publications of the party were *Ghadr di Gunj*, *Ilan-i-Jung*, *Bilan*, "A Little Wisdom is a Dangerous Thing," "Evidence of Figures." These were composed for the Indians and were distributed all over the world. "War Office Memorandum on German Literary Propaganda as Regards India and the Orient." Home Political Deposit, Dec 1916, No. 30. N.A.I.
112. But before leaving England, the delegation, however, made it clear to reporter of a London paper that Canada's "treatment of the Sikhs will do more to injure the British Empire than the gift of six dreadnaughts would have helped." Emigration A Section, 1913, Nos. 31-33. N.A.I.
113. Attempts had been made previously in 1910 and 1912 to charter a ship to run between Calcutta and Vancouver, but without success. Hopkinson, the British Agent had reported in November 1910 that the Hindus in Canada had worked up a plan to bring over Hindus from India. Hopkinson's Report, 17 November 1910. Hopkinson to F.O. 17 November 1910, Judicial and Public, Department F. No. 568/1911. I.O.L.
114. Government of Canada to Secretary of State for Colonies, 16 August 1913. Judicial and Public, Department, No. 1235/1913. I.O.L.
115. Judicial and Public Department, F. No. 1235/1913. I.O.L.
116. Secretary of State to Viceroy, 25 October 1913. *Ibid.*
117. Report of Dr Raghunath Singh on the voyage of *Komagata Maru* Home Political A, Sept. 1914, Nos. 211-224 KW. N.A.I.
118. Chief Secretary, Govt. of Bengal to Secretary, Govt. of India, 29 June 1914, Commerce and Industry Department, Emigration A, September 1914, Nos. 40-47. Even as early as 1910 G.D. Kumar alongwith other leaders in Canada formulated a plan to bring out Hindus from India. However, the scheme did not materialise. Judicial and Public Department No. 568/1911. Amongst the correspondence of Harnam Singh Sehri, who was hanged in the Burma conspiracy case, which the British captured, there were large number of letters from Kumar which showed that he was connected with the organisation of the *Komagata Maru* expedition. *The Ghadr Directory*, op. cit., p. 193. Baba Gurdit Singh had taken active part in the agitation at Singapore for the removal of restrictions on the emigration of Asiatics in Canada. He was reported to be a leader among his compatriots and was popularly known as *Bengal Ka Kaptan*. *Ghadr Directory* (Delhi, 1934), p. 91.

Even the Director of Criminal Intelligence reported that there was no doubt about the connection of Gurdit Singh with the revolutionary Indians in Canada and America. Gurdit Singh had sent to India the prospectus of his steamer company which he named Siri Guru Nanak Steamer Company alongwith the copy of the *Ghadr*. See C R. Cleveland note dated 8.5.1914, Commerce and Industry Emig A, Sept. 1914, Nos. 40-47. N.A.I.

119. William Vincent to Secretary Home Department, 3 December 1914, Home Political A, March 1915, Nos. 1-13. N.A.I.
120. Ker, op. cit., p, 240.
121. *Native Newspapers Report*, Punjab, 1914.
122. *ibid*.
123. R L. Borden to G H. Parley 17 July 1914, Emigration A, Oct.1914, Nos. 3-6. N.A.I.
124. Report of Dr Raghunath Singh on the voyage of the *Komagata Maru*. Home Political A, Sept. 1914, Nos. 211-224 KW. N.A.I.
125. Ker, op. cit., p. 240. "Even Gurdit Singh during both the onward and on its return voyages posed as a revolutionary leader." *Ghadr Directory*, p. 92.
126. S.A. Waiz, *Indians Abroad* (Bombay, 1927), pp. 670-71.
127. *Native Newspapers Reports*, Punjab, 1914.
128. Ismonger and Slattery, op cit., pp. 37-38.
129. US Department of Justice Records, Roll No. N.A.I. A firm of solicitors in Canada refused to take up the case of the Indians since in their opinion the matter was now "beyond the realm of legal proceedings" and had become a question of national policy and diplomacy rather than law. See Baba Gurdit Singh, op. cit., pp. 18-19.
130. Ismonger and Slattery, op cit , p. 38.
131. *The Tribune*, 11 June 1914; *Native Newspapers Reports*, Punjab, 1914.
132. *The Punjabee* (Lahore), 30 June 1914. *Native Newspapers Reports*, Punjab, 1914.
133. *The Tribune*, 11 July 1914. *Native Newspaper Reports*, Punjab, 1914.
134. Secretary of State for India to Viceroy 6 August 1914. Commerce and Industry Department, Emigration B, August 1914, Nos. 10-14. Even a Canadian writer Mackey was of the same view. He blamed the Indian revolutionaries in India and Canada for the *Komagata Maru* enterprise and who had deliberately advised their fellow conntrymen to make this spectacular attempt to breakdown our regulations." Mackey, "Problems of Immigration VII. Komagata Maru," *Westminster Hall Magazine* and *Farthest West Review*, Vol. V, No. 6, July 1914.

135. *The Tribune*, 23 July 1914. *Native Newspapers Reports*, Punjab, 1914.
136. William Vincent to Secretary Home Department, 3 Dec. 1914. Home Political A, March 1915, Nos. 1-13 N.A.I.
137. Randhir Singh, op. cit., p. 12. When *Komagata Maru* left Kobe, the British Ambassador warned the Government of India that these Indians intended to make trouble on arrival in India. British Ambassador in Japan to Government of India, 3 September 1914. F.O. 371/2158/1914. P R.O.
138. Baba Sohan Singh Bhakna before he left America was entrusted by the Ghadr Party with 100 pistols which he was to make over to Gurdit Singh for use of *Komagata Maru* passengers. *Ghadr Directory*, p. 272. It appears that the Ghadr Party had a scheme of sending a consignment of arms and ammunition through the passengers of *Komagata Maru*. However, Tarak Nath Das who was entrusted with the task was arrested by the Canadian authorities while trying to smuggle arms and ammunition into Canada for conveyance to India by the passengers of *Komagata Maru*. D. Petrie, *Communism in India, 1924-27* (Calcutta, 1927), p. 337.
139. Hardinge to Crewe, 15 October 1914. Hardinge Papers.
140. Michael O'Dwyer, *India As I Knew It 1885 1925* (London, 1925), p. 194
141. "Memorandum on German Connection with Indian Sedition." Home Political Deposit, October 1915, No. 43. N.A I.
142. *The Khalsa Advocate*, 31 January 1914. *Native Newspaper Reports*, Punjab, 1914.
143. "A review of seditious and revolutionary activity in the Panjab showing the measures adopted to combat them (hereafter referred to as a review of revolutionary activity in the Punjab). Home Political B, July 1918, Nos. 292-316. N A.I.

## The Echoes of Ghadr in India

### *Revolution February 1915*

After the departure of Har Dayal for Europe in March 1914 the activities of the Ghadr Party were directed by Ram Chandra Peshawari who organised and kept alive the Ghadr Party. The hands of the Ghadr Party were strengthened by the arrival in May 1914 of Maulvi Barkatullah and Bhai Bhagwan Singh (1882-1962) from Tokyo. Har Dayal before his departure had already informed the members of the party that Germany was getting ready for war with England and that it was time for the Indians in America to return home for the revolution. Efforts were made by Bhagwan Singh, Barkatullah and Ram Chandra to propagate the ideas of Ghadr amongst the Indians more vigorously. Indian revolutionaries did not want to miss this opportunity in their aim of launching a revolution in India. At a meeting of the Ghadr party on 15 August 1915, it was decided to devise the plans necessitated by the advent of the war. The meeting decided that the Ghadr party should declare an open warfare against British rule in India and proclaim India a free and sovereign Republic. It was also decided to obtain help from whatsoever quarter it was available for the overthrow of the British in India. The funds for the purchase of arms and ammunition were to be collected and appeals to be issued to Indians all over the world to proceed to India and start fighting for freedom.”<sup>1</sup>

As a result, emissaries were sent to various places where

funds were collected and plans were discussed for the return of the Indians. During their tours, the leaders of the Ghadr party urged their countrymen to return to India to instigate a revolutionary war. This was the time they declared that sacrifice was needed to free the country from foreign rule. They were further told that Great Britain would be driven into the war, and that rebellion would break out in Egypt, Ireland and in other British possessions; that with England engaged in war it was an excellent opportunity to expel the Britishers from India. Immediately after the war, the activities of the Ghadr party were intensified and their members travelled all over the Pacific Coast. As a result of this a number of patriotic Indians proceeded towards the Ashram in San Francisco to seek instructions as to their departure for India and their future plan of work.<sup>2</sup> The names of all those who were ready to proceed were recorded and instructions were issued to them. The urge to fight for their country was so intense that thousands of Indians on the Pacific Coast gave up lucrative employments and many abandoned their property and trade to hurry back to India.<sup>3</sup>

The Government of India had been kept informed of the excitement which the war had created amongst the Indians on the Pacific Coast and in America. The Canadian Government had promptly sent them an intimation that a number of seditious Indians in San Francisco would take the first opportunity of getting back to India.<sup>4</sup> Similar information was received from other sources also which indicated that Sikhs and other Indians were sailing for India in large numbers not only from the West Coast of Canada and United States but from Japan, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Manila, Honolulu and other places.<sup>5</sup>

On the outbreak of the war some of the leaders of the Ghadr Party left as an advance party to persuade Indians in the Far East to return to India and also to establish small nuclei of revolutionary centres in all the intermediate ports such as Hong Kong, Singapore and Rangoon. They reached India by *Tosa Maru* on 28 October 1914. The next ship to leave the shores of America, *S.S. Kareia* with about 70 passengers proceeded towards Hong Kong on 29 August. Other ships which followed in quick succession were *S.S. Siberia* and *S.S. Mashima Maru* and *Naru Sang* carrying the members of

the Ghadr Party. Besides, the following ships left America by the end of 1914 : in September 1914 the *Chingo Maru* sailed with 3 Indians on 3 October 1914; the *Shinyo Maru* with 6, on 5 September 1914; the *Siberia* with 2, on 19 September 1914; the *China* with 11, on 26 September 1914; the *Manchuria* with 24, on 29 August 1914; the *Korea* with 62, on 21 October 1914; the *Tenyo Maru* with 109, and on 24 October 1914 the *Mongolia* with 141.<sup>6</sup>

At the time of departure they were divided into different groups under Nidhan Singh, Kesar Singh, Udham Singh, Jawala Singh and Nawab Khan. Ram Chandra, Barkatullah and Bhagwan Singh told the departing Indians to perform their duty and informed them that arms would be provided to them on their arrival in India. On the failure of this they were to ransack the police stations for rifles.<sup>7</sup>

In India the situation was quite critical. The Government was busy with the problems which came in the wake of the war. They were face to face with danger not only from outside but also within the country. A series of events inside and outside the country just before the war had caused a weakening of the loyalty of the people towards the British Government, especially of the Muslims and the Sikhs. The Tripoli and Balkan Wars of 1911 and 1912 had led to a display of fanaticism on the platform and in the press when the events were represented as wars of the Cross against the Crescent. The Sikhs had been affected in their loyalty by the humiliating treatment meted out to their brethren in Canada, and the return voyage of *Komagata Maru* finally confirmed their belief that the British Government was determined not to help them in any way in Canada. In the words of MacMunn, "the Government was seated as said on a rumbling volcano, uncertain concerning its future activity, how active it might at any moment become, or which crater might burst into eruption."<sup>8</sup> In fact for the Indian revolutionaries the opportunity to stir up a revolt in India was too good to be missed.<sup>9</sup>

In spite of the critical circumstances in which it was placed, the Government of India was not oblivious to the precautions which were to be taken to meet the challenge of the returning Indians. Secret orders had been issued to the officers at the

various ports that every person returning from America or Canada, whether labourer, artisan or student was to be regarded with the greatest suspicion and even as a potential revolutionary.<sup>10</sup> The authorities had already acquired sufficient powers to deal with the situation by passing the Ingress into India Ordinance on 5 September 1914. With the steady arrival of the Indians at the different ports of India the Punjab Government under the provisions of the above ordinance made arrangements in conjunction with the Government of Bengal to examine the returning emigrants at Calcutta and endeavoured to intercept those who were known or reasonably suspected to be dangerous.<sup>11</sup> In spite of these precautionary measures many thousands of Indian emigrants escaped the vigilance of the police.<sup>12</sup> In its initial stages the internment order caused the break up of the organisation to some extent by the detention of the leaders of some groups and the rank and file of others. In spite of this dispersal the group leaders kept in touch with one another and attempted as far as they could to work as one body.<sup>13</sup> On their way back to India, the Indian revolutionaries started a vigorous campaign for securing recruits to the Ghadr Party and a large number of volunteers joined their ranks in Hong Kong, Shanghai, the Straits Settlement, Borneo, Japan and the Philippines.<sup>14</sup> In addition to the recruits for their cause the Indian revolutionaries particularly tried to make contact with the Indian troops that happened to be serving abroad. They went to their barracks, harangued the men and gave them Ghadr literature to read.<sup>15</sup> Thus at Hong Kong, they secretly got in touch with the 26th Punjabis and at Singapore with the Malaya States Guides. The soldiers listened to the Ghadrites and at Singapore they even revolted against the British Government. Even in India in the beginning when the Indian revolutionaries began to move about in the Punjab and started preaching the doctrine of freedom to be achieved through a general rising, they received a certain amount of sympathy and made a number of recruits in Lahore, Amritsar, Jullundur, Ludhiana and Hoshiarpur districts. Their appeal was mainly confined to the peasantry. After having imbibed the knowledge of socialism while in Canada and America, they tried to preach the same to their countrymen. The poor peasants gave

them a patient hearing, but they were not inclined to revolt against their landlords. However, a number of them joined them to oust the British from India. During November, December and January the revolutionaries were joined by greater numbers.<sup>16</sup> By the end of 1914 the internal situation was highly critical and Hardinge informed Crewe that they were having a good deal of trouble in the Punjab from the incursion of revolutionary Indians from San Francisco and that they were doing a great deal of harm. However, he assured Crewe that they had got hold of the leaders under the Ingress Ordinance, but still the minor members were forming themselves into bands.<sup>17</sup> The Government of India took prompt and drastic action, and after having received the reports about the activities of the Ghadrites in the Punjab immediately sent confidential instructions to every police station informing them that these people were a potential source of danger to peace and that it was necessary to keep strict surveillance over those who might halt at any place in their district.<sup>18</sup> The police officers were further instructed to take great care to observe communication of any kind between them and local persons whether suspect or otherwise.<sup>19</sup>

Under these restrictions the Ghadrites desperately tried to pursue their programme. Secret meetings were held at various places, especially at Lahore and Ludhiana. As a result of these meetings, it was decided to loot the treasuries as money was badly needed for the furtherance of the the cause of revolution. But after a few attempts the idea of attacking the treasuries was abandoned and the scheme for the seduction of the army was considered more feasible and quite profitable for the main movement.<sup>20</sup> To implement it the Ghadrites started mixing with the army regiments stationed at different places in the Punjab and they nearly succeeded in inducing the men of the 23rd Cavalry near Lahore to join the revolt against the British Government. However, in spite of the best efforts of the Ghadrites not much success was achieved. Owing largely to the internment of capable leaders like Sohan Singh Bhakna, Kesar Singh and Jawala Singh, the movement lacked definite plans. With hardly any coordination between the different groups in the Punjab and in the absence of any leader to guide



them, some haphazard efforts were made to procure funds and arms by raiding the treasuries at different tehsil headquarters. Several futile attempts were also made to derail trains and blow up bridges; factories for the preparation of bombs were established in various places and persistent attempts were made to tamper with the Indian troops in at least a dozen stations in the Punjab and United Provinces.<sup>21</sup>

It was only after the arrival of Rash Behari Bose (1886-1945) at Amritsar in January 1915 that the movement took a new shape. Soon after their arrival the Ghadrites had contacted the different revolutionary groups in Bengal and full information regarding the return of the Indians from America was given to them. They were told that the Punjabis had come back from America with the express purpose of stirring up trouble in the Punjab and expected that the Bengal revolutionaries should be ready to cooperate at the time of the revolution.<sup>22</sup> But before taking any decision the Bengal revolutionaries sent Sachindra Nath Sanyal to the Punjab in November to find out the potentialities of Ghadr movement. He went back and reported favourably to Rash Behari Bose. Soon after Vishnu Ganesh Pingle (1881-1945), an emissary of the Ghadr Party, who also met quite a few of the Bengal revolutionaries, arrived in the Punjab with the news that a fraction of Bengal group was ready for cooperation.<sup>23</sup> Pingle, who had been a very important leader of the Ghadr Party, was introduced by Bijay Ray Kabiraj and Kulachand Sinha Ray to the inner circle of the Bengal revolutionaries and was later on an effective link between them and the Ghadr Party.<sup>24</sup>

By January 1915 the two groups of revolutionaries joined hands and made definite plans for a revolution in India. Steps were taken for manufacturing bombs and for the procurement of arms. Bomb factories were established in the Punjab while the bombs of the Bengal pattern were provided by Rash Behari Bose and his assistants. Arms were also imported from Bengal. Efforts were made to produce revolutionary leaflets. With the help of duplicators copies of *Ghadr di Goonj* (Echo of Mutiny) and *Ghadr Sandesa* (Message of Mutiny) were printed in Urdu and Gurmukhi. These were widely distributed by the members of the party in practically all the cantonment

areas in northern India.<sup>25</sup> The hardships experienced by the people because of the rising prices as a result of war were fully utilised by the Ghadr party to arouse anti-British feelings amongst the masses. They brought home to the people that the high prices were due to the fact that grain was being exported to maintain supplies to the Allied armies in the field, and even the Viceroy admitted that their slogan "to feed the Europeans the Indians were being starved" had caught the imagination of the people especially in the countryside.<sup>26</sup>

Before proceeding with the actual plan for the revolt, Rash Behari Bose also laid emphasis on the cooperation of the soldiers and a vigorous campaign was set on foot to associate them with the work of the national rising. Agents were despatched to different cantonments to ascertain whether they were willing to cooperate. The Ghadrites had already established contacts with the 23rd Cavalry and two of their men had joined that regiment. With no adequate supply of arms and ammunition the Indian revolutionaries considered the seduction of the army as the only way for forging a successful revolution in the country.<sup>27</sup>

Kartar Singh Saraba and Nidhan Singh made a verbal alliance with Indian troops at Ferozepore. At the end of January 1915, Hirday Ram was specially deputed to assess the political situation at Jullundur, to get into touch with the Dogra and other sepoy's stationed there and win them over to the side of the revolutionaries. Hira Singh Charar was sent to Jacobabad, Piara Singh to Kohat and Sant Gulab Singh and Harnam Singh to Bannu on similar missions.<sup>28</sup> Efforts were also made to align with the troops at Meerut, Kanpur, Allahabad, Benaras, Fyzabad and Lucknow. The response from every cantonment appeared to be encouraging. Even the Director of Criminal Intelligence admitted that they found cases of emissaries of the revolutionaries approaching the troops fearlessly, stopping in the lines and distributing seditious literature to all without report or information reaching the British officers. He further reported that the Indian soldiers listened "readily to the seditious emissaries."<sup>29</sup> In fact "in January and February, the emissaries of the Ghadr Party were tampering with the troops from Jhelum on the North to

as far down as Benaras." The uprising was to start in the different cantonments in the Punjab to be followed in other provinces. It was the most powerful revolt conceived on such a large scale since the mutiny.<sup>30</sup>

Having thus satisfied himself, Rash Behari Bose fixed 21 February 1915 as the date of the rising. The flame was to be lit in Lahore where the 23rd Cavalry converts and the revolutionaries were to massacre the British troops and seize the guns.<sup>31</sup> The rising in Lahore was to be followed at Ferozepore where the depot magazine was to be captured along with the arsenal. Rash Behari did not trust in the feasibility of bringing about the simultaneous rising amongst all the troops stationed at different places but believed that the example of Lahore and Ferozepore might bring the other cantonments into open mutiny. Suspecting the leakage of the plan, however, he decided to anti-date the rising to the night of the 19th and sent emissaries to various selected centres to intimate the change.<sup>32</sup> Two of the emissaries of the Ghadr Party, Balwant Singh and Banta Singh, who were enlisted with the 23rd Cavalry Regiment had given a clear signal for the rising on the 19th, but the information about the change of date was conveyed to the authorities by a spy, Kirpal Singh. The plans of the Indian revolutionaries did not elude the vigilance of the British intelligence and the military authorities after getting the information had taken elaborate precautions on the day of the rising. At 7 o'clock the same evening the whole regiment, except the recruits, was ordered to fall in kept on duty till midnight. Prior information received regarding Ferozepore also enabled the military authorities to checkmate the movement there.<sup>33</sup>

On 19 February the Police raided the headquarters of the Ghadrites at Lahore and arrested a number of their leaders. The failure of the Lahore rising of 19 February gave a death-blow to the main movement to overthrow the British Government in India. From the time of their return to India the Ghadrites had to work against heavy odds. Before they could really get to work in India they lost many of their leaders and when they finally began the secret propaganda their members kept on giving away their secrets to the police.<sup>34</sup> The collapse of the main conspiracy was chiefly due to the fact that the

police was able to introduce into the inner circle of the revolutionaries a spy named Kirpal Singh, a cousin of Balwant Singh, a trooper in the 23rd Cavalry. However, various other factors also thwarted the plans of the Ghadrites. The firmness with which the Government dealt with the revolutionaries under the Ingress Ordinance led to the disorganisation of the whole movement. Not only that, in March 1915 the Government passed the Defence of India Act for taking prompt legal action against the Ghadrites. In the words of the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, were it not for the prompt arrest and internment under the special powers given by the Ingress Ordinance and the Defence of India Act of persons suspected of active participation, Government could not have obtained the knowledge of the secret activities of the conspirators which enabled it to frustrate their plans.<sup>35</sup> The three requisites for a successful revolution laid down by the Ghadr Party were men, money and arms. The Indian revolutionaries possessed at the outset some fine material so far as men were concerned, but they were rather weak in the other essentials. At the time of their departure from America the Ghadrites were held out hopes of being provided with arms in India but they were disappointed when no arms were made available to them. It appears from the available evidence that with a weak organisation and no capable leader to guide them, the Ghadrites decided to raise the standard of revolt at the behest of Rash Behari Bose. The Ghadrites in India had lost touch with leaders in the United States and other Indian revolutionaries on the Continent who were still busy with the finalisation of the schemes with the German Government. By October 1914 after having formed the Indian National Party in Berlin, they had sent two of their emissaries to inform the Bengal revolutionaries and the Ghadrites about the help in the shape of arms and ammunition which was coming. The revolutionaries in India under the guidance of Rash Behari Bose did not wait for the help from outside and made futile attempts to forge a revolution with the collaboration of the Indian soldiers stationed at different places.<sup>36</sup> Despite the initial success which the Ghadrites secured amongst the people in the Punjab, they did not get any active support from the majority of the population who were still loyal to the British Government. According

to O'Dwyer, "the great mass of the rural population, including the Sikhs remained staunch and loyal and continued to give, often at great risk, the most active assistance to the authorities in rounding up and bringing to justice the revolutionaries."<sup>37</sup> For the Indian revolutionaries to succeed in such circumstances was extremely difficult. The men who came from America were efficient and experienced in public assemblies, speech-making and the production of revolutionary literature,<sup>38</sup> but due to lack of proper organisation and poor leadership and with scarce money and arms the attempt to revolt had scant chance of success. The Director of Criminal Intelligence commented that the attempt to forge a revolution in the Punjab was not the work of illiterate peasants but of persons who were acquainted with all the methods of determined and intelligent conspiracy.<sup>39</sup> The situation was critical in the Punjab and Hardinge considered it fortunate that O'Dwyer the Lieut-Governor of the Punjab succeeded in getting information about the conspiracy.<sup>40</sup> The patriotic Indians had returned to their Motherland sworn to overthrow the British Government and many pledged themselves not to go to their homes until their object was achieved.<sup>41</sup>

Moreover, it appears that not many revolutionary groups from Bengal cooperated with the Ghadrites as they did later on with the Indian National Party based in Berlin. The reason being the secular character of the Ghadr movement, which perhaps could not fit in with the ideology of the revolutionaries from Bengal. There was a serious discussion between Rash Behari Bose and Pingle on the manner of treating the Muslims after the revolt was successful. The indecision and wavering attitude on the part the Bengali revolutionaries on this point "naturally militated against really effective action in any direction."<sup>42</sup>

The German Foreign Office after having helped in the formation of the Indian National Party also failed to take notice of this mighty exodus of Indians towards India and could not decide in time to send the desired help. Petrie remarked that the Germans lost the best opportunity they were ever likely to be afforded in failing to finance the early thousands of Ghadr revolutionaries who flowed into India on the

outbreak of the war. Physically many of these men were magnificent, many had military training and they got back inside India itself before the British Government had full information as to their true character and intentions.<sup>43</sup>

The Government of India after having arrested a number of revolutionaries proceeded with the task of prosecuting them. Under the Defence of India Act special tribunals were established and they were tried in nine conspiracy cases without an opportunity to defend themselves.<sup>44</sup> This initial failure of the movement came as a great setback for the future plans of the Indian revolutionaries. The first phase of the movement was over, the second phase began with the active association of the Indian revolutionaries in the United States and on the Continent with the German Foreign Office.

### *The Singapore Mutiny*

In their programme of a revolution in India for the overthrow of the British Government, the leaders of the Ghadr Party gave clear instructions to the returning Indians to infiltrate into the Indian regiments stationed at different places on their way. They considered the rising of the troops as a preliminary step towards a general revolt by the people in India. With this end in view contacts were made with Indian troops stationed at Shanghai, Hong Kong, Penang, Malaya, Singapore and Burma. In India strenuous attempts were made to align with various regiments and a number of army units came under the spell of the Ghadr propaganda. The various regiments in India that were mixed up with the Indian revolutionaries were 22nd and 23rd Cavalry, 36th and 47th Sikhs, 26th and 62nd Punjabis and 93rd Infantry.<sup>45</sup> However, in the absence of any well-knit organisation no substantial success was achieved. Outside India the first regiment affected by the Ghadr propaganda was 130th Baluchis who had been transferred to Rangoon in November 1914. There was hardly any restriction on the movements of the regiment after its transfer which gave the opportunity to the Ghadrites to infuse in these men the tenets of *ghadr*. By January 1915, the regiment had been seduced from its allegiance and was prepared to mutiny. The still-born rising was, however, nipped in the bud by the military

authorities who took drastic action against these men, and severely punished 200 of the plotters.<sup>46</sup>

The Ghadrites then tried to influence the men of the Malaya State Guides, stationed at Singapore. The regiment consisted mostly of Muslims, had pro-Turkish feelings which they expressed in a letter to the Turkish Consul, Ahmad Mallah Daud, informing him that the regiment was prepared to mutiny against the British Government and fight for the Turks and requested him that a Turkish warship might be sent to Singapore.<sup>47</sup> The interception of the letter by the British authorities in Burma enabled them to send the information of the "intended rising of troops" and thus prevented its occurrence. However, the British authorities could not prevent the rising of another regiment, the 5th Light Infantry, stationed at Singapore. This rising, according to an American correspondent, was second only to that of the sepoy mutiny of 1857. The 5th Light Infantry was sent from Madras in October 1914 to replace the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry, which had been ordered to France. From the moment of its arrival indications of unrest and discontent were apparent.<sup>48</sup> The regiment was stationed at Singapore temporarily and orders had been issued for its transfer to Hong Kong.

The unsatisfactory state of discipline prevailing amongst the men of the 5th Light Infantry was fully utilised by the Indian revolutionaries who were then very active in the Far East.<sup>49</sup> The Government of India at the time of the mutiny, however, made desperate efforts to show that it had no connection with the Indian revolutionaries and that it occurred on account of some unpopular regimental promotions and the instigation of the German prisoners of war interned on the island.<sup>50</sup> The *New York Times*' correspondent in the Far East, while agreeing that "there had been some slight troubles to be sure, regarding certain promotions, which had taken place," commented that it was absurd to ascribe the resulting mutiny to this. In his view the fundamental causes "lay deeper and were of a far more complex nature."<sup>51</sup> Later reports proved, however, that the mutiny of the 5th Light Infantry at Singapore was caused by the revolutionary preachings of the "Muhammadan and Hindu conspirators belonging to the American Ghadr

Party." The Committee of Inquiry also commented that the town and settlement of Singapore together with the neighbouring state enjoyed a widespread notoriety as being a focus for Indian revolutionaries passing to and from the Far East and America. It was also well-known for harbouring many rank Indian revolutionaries amongst its residents. The inspiration came from the German prisoners of war who were then interned in Singapore. There is, therefore little reason to doubt that without the incitement of the Ghadr party the mutiny would have been most improbable whatever grievances or indiscipline there might have been in the regiment.<sup>52</sup> The Ghadr leader who played a prominent role in this event was Mujteba Hussain alias Mul Chund who had been a *Zilladar* in the Court of Wards at Cawnpore. He appeared to have found his way to Manila where he came in touch with the Ghadr Party and then came to Singapore and helped to promote the mutiny. Others involved in the affair were Hira Singh of Charar and Gian Chand. The arrest of the three Ghadrites in Rangoon who were trying to incite the regiments there to revolt confirmed the authorities in their belief that they were also instrumental in inciting the regiment at Singapore to rebel.<sup>53</sup>

The 5th Light Infantry, though fully under the spell of Ghadr propaganda, did not think of revolting against the authorities until news of its transfer to Hong Kong was received around the first of January. It was then, and after the Singapore garrison had been depleted until 200 of the Royal Garrison Artillery and 50 Sappers were the only regular European troops left behind<sup>54</sup>, that they decided to revolt.

The date of the mutiny had been fixed for 17 February, one day before the arrival of the *Nile* which was to take the regiment to Hong Kong. But the *Nile* arrived at Singapore on the morning of 15 February, three days ahead of time. This resulted in upsetting the old plans of the mutineers and they were now face to face with the necessity of completing new ones very rapidly. Partially aware of the unrest in the regiment and in order to check it the authorities at Singapore ordered the removal of the ammunition on board the *Nile* before nightfall. Events at Singapore moved rapidly and the signal for the mutiny was given by sepoy Ismail Khan who fired the first shot when the



men of the regiment were loading ammunition on the trucks at Alexandra Barracks. Almost immediately the mutineers were in possession of the lorry and its contents, its guardians killed. The fight was on.

The situation was, no doubt, critical but with a presence of mind rare on such occasions, Admiral Jerram immediately got in touch with all the men-of-war cruising in nearby waters. The Russian cruiser *Aural* located in Penang, was ordered to proceed to Singapore as quickly as possible. Similarly the French cruiser *Montcalm* and a Japanese cruiser were located and requested to come for help.<sup>55</sup>

The mutineers, in the meantime, divided themselves into three groups and started killing their European officers. Their first move was to release the German prisoners of war who were interned in Tanglin barracks and were expected to join the mutineers. The attack by the mutineers on the camp was so sudden that there was a terrible massacre. Captain P.N. Gerrard, the commandant, and three other officers were killed outright, alongwith seven N.C.Os. and men of the Regular and Johore State Forces.<sup>56</sup> According to an eye-witness account all the guards were shot down and the guard room attacked. The commandant of the camp and the first Lieutenant and some of the volunteers remained while the rest fled in panic. The Malaya soldiers numbering about 80 who were stationed with the volunteers, refused to fight and also ran away. The sound of arms at first indistinct, gradually became louder in the town and the place assumed the appearance of a field of battle. The British were thus reminded of the terrible massacres of their countrymen by Indians in the past. The approximate number of mutineers who took part in the mutiny was eight hundred. Neither the Malaya police nor the troops had the requisite fighting efficiency to tackle them.<sup>57</sup>

It was only by 19 February, when the authorities got adequate reinforcements from various quarters, that they could with extreme difficulty bring the situation well in hand, although over 600 men were still unaccounted for.<sup>58</sup>

“The failure of the plot,” writes Arthur Thompson, “was largely due to two men. The first was the Rajput bugler, who at the first shot blew the alarm, so that every Rajput took his

rifle and so prevented the plotters from arming the Germans with their rifles as promised. The second was the retired Sergeant-Major of Marines, who was the confidential clerk to the N.I.O. There was no officer—Naval or Military—on duty at the headquarters. When the C.O. telephoned that the regiment was out of hand, Mr Cross took the message and immediately in the C-in-C's name ordered Captain Marryat of H.M.S. *Cadmus* to land every man and it was the machine-gun party from that ship which brought things<sup>59</sup> under control.

Working on instinct rather than concrete planning the mutineers implemented at the very outset the first stage of their plan, namely, the release of the German prisoners and the killing of a few Europeans, but in the absence of any organisation and capable leader, not much was achieved. According to Dickenson the main danger to the colony was in fact over before either the civil authorities or the army were able to assess the true situation.<sup>60</sup> But this view is contradicted by the account of a Japanese writer, who holds that by the night of 15 February the situation in Singapore was beyond the control of the British. With a landing party of ninety men from the *Cadmus* and a few British troops and some unorganised British volunteers, it was difficult for them to capture the mutineers. From his account we learn that the Governor Sir Arthur Young requested the Japanese Consul for help for controlling the situation. Accordingly Lieutenant-Commander Araki contacted Bokoyo harbour for men of war to come and give assistance which was received on the 17th and 18th when two Japanese ships "Ottawa" and "Tsushima" landed their men at Singapore. By night of the 18th, with the collaboration of the Japanese volunteers, the Japanese landing parties took possession of the Alexandra Barracks.<sup>61</sup> The report from the military headquarters Singapore, however, denied altogether the help given by the Japanese. General Staff reported that the Japanese soldiers went to Alexandra Barracks when it had already been occupied by their men and in reality the Japanese did not do much.<sup>62</sup>

In all 12 British officers from different regiments and 15 civilians were killed and the number of wounded was much larger.<sup>63</sup> The official announcement issued in London on 24 February 1915, however, listed eight officers among the total of

twenty-five, who were killed, while the rest were wounded.<sup>64</sup> The majority of the mutineers were tried by court martial set up under martial law. In due course sentences were pronounced on some two hundred and twelve of them, of whom death sentence was awarded to 2 Indian officers, 6 Havildars and 39 sepoys and the rest were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment.<sup>65</sup>

The climax of the court martial came with the surprising announcement that the death sentence would be carried out in public. Dickenson describes that

**long before the appointed hour the amphitheatre was full of people. At 2.30 p.m. on the first day a firing party of ten men from the Royal Artillery marched on the ground, halted and stood at ease. A few minutes later under an armed escort of Sikh Police, the first two mutineers to be sentenced to death were marched out of the main gate of the prison. Major Dewar was in command. The condemned men Subedar Dunda Khan and Jamadar Chisti Khan dressed in plain native clothes in step with the escort marched erect and steadily to the execution posts, to which they were tied by the ankles. Facing the firing party at eight paces their bearing never faltered. The condemned men stood rigidly to attention. They were not blindfolded. Whatever their crimes, their calm and dignity at the end was impressive.<sup>66</sup>**

The remaining offenders were executed in the same way. Thus ended the Singapore mutiny, a sad sequel to a dramatic beginning. It collapsed as hurriedly as it had commenced. In view of the firmness with which the authorities handled the critical situation, it was unlikely that the mutiny would have affected other regiments. "And yet" writes Dickenson, "how different might have been the tale had the mutineers not failed so lamentably in their planning and in their leadership."<sup>67</sup> The news of the mutiny was completely suppressed in India and even in the Far East. Instead of helping the Ghadriles -- which it could if it was known in India -- the sudden outbreak of the mutiny at Singapore alarmed the authorities and, now armed with martial law, they were in a position "to establish military censorship on

mails passing through Singapore, and "to examine or intern suspects who otherwise could not have been touched."<sup>68</sup>

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12. Altogether about 8,000 persons returned to India. O'Dwyer, op. cit., p. 196.
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30. Michael O'Dwyer, *op. cit.*, p. 201.
31. After the failure of the rising, twelve men of the 23rd Cavalry were hanged and six sentenced to transportation for life. See F.D. Conf. B. Ext. 1917, Nos. 75-76. N.A.I.
32. "Statement of Mula Singh." Home Political B, May 1916, Nos. 436-39. Harnam Singh had suspicion about Kirpal Singh and after he had informed Rash Behari Bose, it was decided to change the date to 19th. Statement of Amar Singh. Home Political A, Sept 1918. Nos. 55-77. N.A.I.
33. Ker, *op. cit.*
34. Nawab Khan was arrested in November 1914 and Mula Singh was arrested about the middle of February 1915 and the latter gave to the authorities much useful information about the Indian revolutionaries and their plans. Note C R. Cleveland 31 March 1915. Home Political B, May 1916, Nos. 436-439. N.A.I.

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36. That Rash Behari Bose was determined to organise an armed revolution without waiting for the arrival of German help is clearly reflected in his conversation with Kadareswar Guha of *Anusilan Samiti*. See Uma Mukherjee, *Two Great Indian Revolutionaries* (Calcutta, 1966), p. 127.
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49. "Report in connection with the Mutiny of 5th Light Infantry at Singapore 1915" (Simla, 1915), India Office Library, London. (Hereafter referred to as Report, Singapore Mutiny).
50. Note General Staff Branch, 23 March 1915, Home Political A, June 1915, Nos. 18-20, N.A.I.
51. *New York Times*, 22 May 1915. Ram Chandra also wrote later on that "it was neither the regimental jealousy nor the German intrigues, but the propaganda of the Hindu revolutionaries and their intrigues which led to the Singapore uprising." US Department of Justice Records, Roll No. 4. N.A.I.
52. Report Singapore Mutiny, op. cit. The claim of the German officer, a prisoner of war from Emdon Oberlieutenant Julius Lauterbach that he was responsible for creating anti British feelings amongst the Indian soldiers is contradicted by Dickenson who wrote that the German

prisoners of War behaved extremely well, which would completely discount the widely held belief of German complicity in the mutiny. See Lowell J. Thomas, *Lauterbach of the China Sea* (New York, 1930) and Dickenson's Account. A.H. Dickenson was an officer cadet of the Strait Settlement Police at the time of the mutiny and submitted his account of the events to the Royal Commonwealth Society, London. The file about the Singapore Mutiny also contains account by other British officers who were present in Singapore in February 1915. Hereafter referred to as "Dickenson's Account."

53. "Sedition Committee Report," p. 170. See also "Report Singapore Mutiny op. cit., which also came to the conclusion that the 5th Light Infantry proved to be a ready and fertile field for implanting of seditious ideas by the emissaries of the Ghadr Party. *ibid.*
54. *New York Times*, 22 May 1915.
55. *ibid.*
56. MacMunn, op. cit., p. 113
57. "Statement of H.C. Hannke," a German prisoner of war at Singapore. Home Political A, July 1917, Nos. 206-20. N.A.I.
58. *New York Times*, 22 May 1915.
59. "The Account of Singapore Mutiny" by Arthur Thompson, who was Provost Marshal at Singapore during the mutiny, available with the Royal Commonwealth Society Library, London.
60. Dickenson, op. cit.
61. Extracts "From Nanyo" by M. Tsukuda, editor of "Nanyo Oyobu Nipponjin". Foreign Department Confidential B, Ext. Sec. B, 1918, Nos. 41-60. N.A.I.
62. General Staff to Foreign Department, 23 Dec. 1914. *ibid.*
63. Thompson's Account, op. cit.
64. *New York Times*, 24 February 1915.
65. "Report in connection with the Mutiny of 5th Light Infantry at Singapore 1915" (Simla 1915). Other sentences given to the persons were as follows :

	<i>Havildar</i>	<i>Rank and File</i>
Transportation for life	2	62
Transportation for 20 years	1	7
" 15 "		26
" 10 "		30
" 7 "		9
Rigorous imprisonment for 5 years		3

	<i>Rank and File</i>
Rigorous imprisonment for 3	1
„ „ 2	7
„ „ 1	1
Simple imprisonment without solitary confinement for 2 years	1

Military Department Proceedings, November 1915,  
Nos. 1533-84, NAI. 3

66. Dickenson's Account, op. cit.

67. *ibid.*

68. Thompson's Account, op. cit.



## Germany and the Indian Revolutionaries

Germany constituted the focal point around which international diplomacy was developing in the course of the first decade of the present century and therein lay its significance to the Indian revolutionary movement. The Indian revolutionaries viewed the position of Germany as conducive to the promotion of their ideological interest, and even though belonging to a subject country, they considered themselves free to exploit the situation by an attempt to enter into diplomatic relations with a country such as Germany, which was at the time emerging as by far the strongest force among the axis powers.

There was nothing new in the Indian revolutionaries' alliance with Germany. England or any other country would have resorted to the same policy in times of need. Theirs was just a form of secret alliance quite familiar to European nations, where national ambitions and imperialistic designs reigned supreme, precipitating crisis in world affairs. The kind of alliance planned by the Indian revolutionaries was guided by considerations of expediency. None of the parties involved showed any respect or regard for the recognised code of the chancery.

The Indian revolutionaries had closely watched the rivalries which were gradually developing amongst great powers prior to the world war. It was anticipated that the clash of interest might lead to serious conflicts between England and Germany and that they were clear in their mind about the

countries which could help them in such a situation. They recognized Germany as a country hostile to England. Her statesmen were naturally interested in any and every activity that tended to weaken Britain, especially the Indian nationalist movement, which aimed at full freedom. It was hoped that in the event of England getting involved in the war, her power would be weakened by an uprising in India. Thus on both sides there was lively diplomatic speculation, based primarily on their mutual interest which lay in the destruction of a common enemy. None of the parties in the alliance, cared to assess the real state of affairs in India.

From the very beginning Indian revolutionary groups followed in the footsteps of other nations for securing the active assistance of an outside power in times of crisis. For many years they had believed, like the Irish revolutionaries, that England's difficulty would be India's opportunity. Even the Government of India on the eve of the war suspected that war was likely to be taken advantage of by the Indian revolutionaries and they were sure to join the enemies of the Empire. In the event of war with Germany specially, they hopefully thought they could reckon on German sympathy.<sup>1</sup>

As early as 1909 Madame Cama had considered Berlin as the safest place whence the revolutionaries could carry on their propaganda without hindrance. She had also advocated the cultivation of friendly relations with Germany which was likely to be of great advantage to the cause of Indian independence. Her lecturing tour of Germany also brought some awareness of the Indian question in that country. During 1909 Chattopadhyaya went to Germany and started the publication of a paper *Talvar* from Berlin, with the aim of conducting anti-British propaganda and to enlist the support and sympathy of the Germans for the emancipation of India.

During these years, the Indian revolutionaries on the continent had an inkling that within a comparatively short time Germany and England would be at war. That would be the time, in their opinion, when India should throw off the British yoke and the revolutionaries should be ready when the time arrived. Their assessment was that with England fighting for life in the West, India would not encounter very serious

resistance in the East.<sup>2</sup> In the same year many German delegates offered help and sympathy at the Egyptian Nationalist Congress to the Indian revolutionaries.<sup>3</sup>

After the formation of the Ghadr Party in the United States, its organ *Ghadr* started publishing news about the coming war. British investigations conducted later on revealed that the visit of the great German writer Bernhardt to San Francisco in 1913 resulted in articles in *Ghadr* in which Har Dayal showed that he had awareness of the coming war with Germany.<sup>4</sup> If the Indian revolutionaries were keen to align with Germany, the German Government was equally eager to cultivate their friendship. By 1907, when the Indian revolutionary movement was at its apex, the Government of India suspected that it was getting help and encouragement from foreign powers, especially from Germany. However, they were not sure about the extent of help, as the "machinery for finding out the truth in such matters was inadequate."<sup>5</sup> In the same year the Director of Criminal Intelligence reported about German agents who were distributing seditious pamphlets amongst the tribal chiefs in the north-west frontier.<sup>6</sup>

Besides Europe the Indian revolutionaries in New York were also trying to form an alliance with the German socialists.<sup>7</sup> At the same time Morley informed Minto that the German ambassador in the United States was sending alarming reports to his Government of the Indian nationalist movement on the Pacific Coast.<sup>8</sup> There is no doubt that the German statesmen took keen interest in the development of the political situation in India, which they could see would increase England's difficulties in case of a war in Europe. Discussing the position of Germany and analysing the alignment of the powers, Bernhardt wrote in 1911 that besides the rivalry of the United States, England had to face another danger that threatened her vitality. "This is", the author said, was "due to the nationalist movement in India and Egypt." He particularly referred to the pronounced revolutionary and nationalist tendencies amongst the Hindus and the growth of the pan-Islamic agitation among Indian Mohammedans, a combination between which might, in his opinion, shake Britain's high position in the world.<sup>9</sup> In March 1914 the *Berlin Tageblatt*

referred to the secret revolutionary societies in India which were spreading their activities with outside help. But before the war, the German Foreign Office gave no substantial help to the Indian revolutionaries. Perhaps, Germany was under the impression that India would need very little extraneous prompting and assistance to rise against the British if the latter were in difficulty owing to a big Continental war. It was because of this that "not much attention was paid by the German Government to instigation in India before the war."<sup>10</sup> Similarly the Indian revolutionaries who were trying to enlist the sympathy of Germany, never asked for any concrete assistance before the war. But the alliance did mature on the outbreak of the war. Whether the Indian revolutionaries and German statesmen were right or wrong in their estimate of the revolutionary elements in India, it may not be possible to say but both were eager to utilise this opportunity to overthrow the British power and thereby deal a fatal blow to England's high position in the Orient.

Har Dayal left the United States in March 1914 with the intention of approaching the German Government for support during the coming war for the purpose of forging a successful revolution in India. Har Dayal went to Switzerland, where he joined the Pro-India Society started by Champakaraman Pillai (1891-1934) in Zurich in 1912. The reports of the British intelligence show that Har Dayal was busy organising an Indo-Egyptian revolutionary congress to be held at Zurich in August 1914,<sup>11</sup> with the object of bringing all the Indian revolutionaries at one place and to decide about the future programme of work. The Pro-India Society also brought out a journal called *Pro-India* in which it was propagated that the Indian revolutionaries in Europe should join hands with Germany since "the fate of the world was in Germany's hands" and she would "set the Indians free."<sup>12</sup>

Naturally after the outbreak of the war, there was a great deal of activity amongst the Indian revolutionaries. Some of them went to Constantinople to enlist the cooperation of the Turks. Pramatha Nath Dutt *alias* Dawood Ali Khan sent information from Constantinople to Madame Cama and Pillai that the Turks were very sympathetic towards the Indian

revolutionary movement. In his view Turkey would prove a safe asylum for Indian political refugees and recommended that an anti-British centre might be established there.<sup>12</sup> Accordingly Har Dayal considered it worthwhile to pay a visit to Constantinople to find out whether Turkey could be utilised during the war in the cause of India's freedom.

On the outbreak of the war, the Indian revolutionaries whether they were in the United States or in Europe hoped for active collaboration with Germany in their plans of overthrowing the British Government in India. With this aim in view they approached the German Consulates in their respective places.

In the beginning of September 1914, Pillai called at the German Consulate-General at Zurich and gave him an outline of the programme of the Indian revolutionaries. The latter promised to communicate this to his Government and also to obtain permission to publish anti-British literature in Germany.<sup>13</sup>

But the actual negotiations with the German Foreign Office for getting active help were conducted by Virendranath Chattopadhyaya and Dr Abhinash Chandra Bhattacharya. They placed before the German Foreign Office concrete proposals in which they asked for a national loan, to be repaid on the achievement of Indian independence. They also sought arms and German assistance for Indian revolutionaries working in different countries. Further they asked the German Foreign Office to make arrangements for the despatch of Indians to India; to give training to them in the manufacture and application of explosives; to provide assistance for the publication of statements, circulars and leaflets to be issued by them from time to time, and to broadcast them if possible. Concrete efforts were to be made to send arms, ammunition and other necessaries with German help. The whole work was to be guided by an Indo-German Committee to be formed. Abhinash Bhattacharya through his contacts arranged a meeting between Chattopadhyaya and Baron Von Bertheim of the German Foreign Office. Chattopadhyaya then had a meeting with Baron Oppenheim.<sup>14</sup> As a result of these meetings, a telegram was sent to Har Dayal at Constantinople on 21

September 1914 to come immediately<sup>16</sup> to Berlin for the settlement of the terms with the German Foreign Office.

By the end of September, a preliminary understanding was reached between the two parties and an Indian Committee was set up. Har Dayal had not come by this time and another telegram was sent requesting him to start immediately for Berlin.<sup>16</sup> The four leading members of the Committee at the time of its formation were Champakaraman Pillai, Virendranath Chattopadhyaya, Dr Mareshwar Govinda Prabhakar and Dr Abdul Hafiz. Har Dayal joined the party by the beginning of January 1915. Other Indian revolutionaries who subsequently became active members of this organisation were Tarak Nath Das, Mohammed Barkatullah, Chandra Kanta Chakravarty, Harambalal Gupta, Bhupendranath Datta (1880-1961) and M.P. Tirumal Acharya.<sup>17</sup>

It has already been mentioned that on the outbreak of the war the Ghadr Party started preparations for despatching their workers to India with the aim of creating an upheaval in the country. Barkatullah informed Har Dayal about this move and also explained that in order to expedite the work of bringing about a successful revolution in India, it was essential to get German help. Barkatullah requested Har Dayal to borrow necessary funds from his German friends and hoped that his presence in Berlin at that time would enable him to solve the financial problem without loss of time. Barkatullah further referred to the enthusiasm shown by the Indians both in the United States and in Canada to support their country's cause with money as well as life.<sup>18</sup> But there is hardly any evidence to show that the German Foreign Office took any serious notice of this letter from Barkatullah or made any effort to assist the returning Ghadrites in forging a revolution in India.

When the Berlin Committee<sup>19</sup> was formed its function was to advise the German Foreign Office, and to devise methods of damaging the prestige of England. In the initial stages it served as a sort of oriental translation bureau which translated German news and other literature into oriental languages for distribution among the Indian prisoners of war in the Middle East and for dissemination by means of aircraft among the

Indian troops on the front.<sup>20</sup> The Committee produced large quantities of revolutionary literature and established propaganda centres at different places in Europe and the Middle East. Literary propaganda was also considered necessary to counteract the statements which were being issued by the British and were in circulation in Germany and other countries. The other aim of the propaganda was to enlist the sympathies of the educated classes in Germany for the Indian people by projecting before them the correct picture about India.<sup>21</sup>

During the first few months of its existence the Berlin Committee was engaged mainly in the task of flooding the world with pamphlets on India and was setting up agencies in almost all the neutral countries for the distribution of its literature. The Committee was also busy with the question of deciding "who among the Indians in Germany should be interned and who should be enrolled as members to work against Britain in Germany and elsewhere."<sup>22</sup> It was only towards the end of December 1914 that the Berlin Committee submitted their scheme for working in active collaboration with the Ghadr Party in America "in order to carry into effect all the plans in connection with the prospective revolution in India."<sup>23</sup>

Dhirendranath Sarkar alongwith N.S. Marathe was sent to the United States by the Berlin Committee with instructions to send youngmen to India and to inform the Indians there that German help was coming. They also carried a letter from the German Foreign Secretary for the German Ambassador in the United States who was asked to pay them dollars equivalent to 25,000 marks.<sup>24</sup> The Berlin Committee knew that the work in the United States was not proceeding properly on account of financial and other difficulties. A telegram received from German representative in Washington at this time contained a request that the Ghadr Party wanted an agent from Berlin who could organise the work and could help in the importation of arms to India.<sup>25</sup> Perhaps, it was on the basis of this telegram that the Berlin Committee asked permission of the German Foreign Office to send a man with good judgment, business capacity and full information about the

whole movement as well as a perfect knowledge of the American situation, who was to be entrusted with the selection of the people and the coordination of the work in America. The German Foreign Office was requested to sanction 100,000 marks of which 50,000 each were to be placed at the disposal of the German Consuls in New York and San Francisco for the purchase of arms.<sup>26</sup> Immediately after the acceptance of the proposal Alfred Zimmermann, the German Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, sent a telegram to Von Bernstorff, the German ambassador in the United States, saying that

**A confidential agent of the Berlin Committee Heramba Lal Gupta is shortly leaving for America in order to organise the importation of arms and the conveyance of Indians, now residents in the United States to India. He is provided with definite instructions. You could please place at his disposal the sum which he requires for this purpose in America, at Shanghai and Batavia, viz., 1,50,000 Marks.<sup>27</sup>**

In a supplementary message Von Bernstorff was directed to speed up in conjunction with H.L. Gupta the training of the Indian revolutionaries in the use of explosives.<sup>28</sup>

The Berlin Committee, however, missed the opportunity offered by the first three months of the war of helping the thousands of Indians who returned from America. It was announced as early as October 1914 at a meeting in California that assurance of German help had been received, but in the actual execution of the February Revolution in India, the signs of German assistance according to the reports of the British intelligence were few and far between. The returning emigrants, according to the same report, approached German Consulates at various ports and received advice and possibly also money and arms, but it is impossible to believe that the attempt made by the Indian revolutionaries for a revolution in the Punjab in February 1915 was in any way supported by Germany. The movement was in fact planned and carried out before the German Secret Service or the Berlin Committee had time to get into touch with the leaders and assume control.<sup>29</sup>



The Berlin Indian Committee was attached to the German General Staff with its headquarters at 28 Weilandstrasse, Charlottenburg, Berlin and was under the immediate charge of Baron Wesendonk of the Foreign ministry and functioned under the general supervision of Alfred Zimmermann.<sup>30</sup> The first president of the party was Dr Mansur Ahmed, but actually its work was carried on under the management of a Committee consisting of seven members, viz., Hari Dayal, Chattopadhyaya, Barkatullah, Dr Abdul Hafiz, B.N. Datta, Champakaraman Pillai and Dr M.G. Prabhakar. After a few months the office of the President was abolished when Dr Mansur Ahmed left for Italy. From then onward the Committee functioned collectively. In July 1915 the Committee was given the exclusive Indian complexion and its name was changed to Indian Independence Committee.<sup>31</sup>

After the first failure of the Ghadriles in India in February 1915, the Berlin Committee decided to bring the Indian revolutionaries working at different places under a central control. Steps were taken to contact the revolutionaries in India and to inform them about the despatch of arms and ammunition. Alongwith this, various schemes based on the actual geographical situation in India were formulated. Attempts were now to be made for a revolt in India by land and by sea, the former from the nearest neutral base, the Dutch East Indies and the latter from the neutral neighbours of India—Siam on the east and Persia and Afghanistan on the north-west. The German Consul in Shanghai was to be in charge of the operation in the Far East. Emissaries were sent to the Far East and the Near East for the successful execution of the various schemes.<sup>32</sup> The members of the Committee visited Indian prisoners of war camps and tried to persuade them to fight against the British. The Indian prisoners of war were mainly confined to the *Zossen* camp about 12 miles from Berlin, which was under the supervision of Dr Mansur and was frequently visited by Hari Dayal, Karta Ram, and Tarak Nath Das. The prisoners were exhorted to rise in rebellion and drive the British out of India. Since the majority of prisoners were Muslims, they were urged to go to Turkey and to fight on the side of their co-religionists. Under the spell of the propaganda, many came forward to join the

fight against the British and accompanied Har Dayal to Constantinople.<sup>33</sup>

Before putting the above schemes into operation, the Indian revolutionaries signed an agreement with the German Government. According to a British intelligence report, a treaty was "drawn up between the Indian Committee and the German Government about the beginning of 1915. It bore the signatures of Benthmann Hollweg, Von Jagow, Chattopadhyaya, Har Dayal, Mahendra Pratap and Barkatullah". By the terms of this treaty, the German Government promised that in return for the help given by the Indian Committee, they would do their best, both during and after the war to secure independence for India. The Berlin Committee stipulated, however, that all money given to them by Germany was to be repaid after independence.<sup>34</sup> Soon after this agreement the Indian National Party issued a manifesto declaring their aim to achieve freedom for India and their determination not to stop till India was free.<sup>35</sup> Besides the above agreement, the Berlin Committee subsequently also asked for a written assurance from the German Foreign Office that "if the Indian Princes and native leaders undertook to wage war against the English for the establishment of an Indian National Government" the German Government was "to extend moral and material help to them in the form of arms and ammunition, financial loans and recognition of the provisional government that may be established by them" and "that the Imperial German Government had no other than commercial and cultural interests in furthering the cause of Indian National Independence."<sup>36</sup> It was one thing for the German Government to sign a secret agreement with the Indian revolutionaries, and quite another to declare publicly their intentions towards the question of Indian independence. Har Dayal persuaded the German Foreign Office to realise that the Indian revolutionaries could be very useful in not only shortening the war but also in helping to extend German trade influences from Berlin-Baghdad railway to Bengal.<sup>37</sup> After great deal of negotiations between the Indian revolutionaries and the German Foreign Office on this issue, the latter at last agreed, and Zimmermann gave the desired assurance. Almost about a month after Zimmermann gave his consent to

the formation of a secret parliamentary commission which was to advise the foreign office, on Indian affairs to the Berlin Committee was anxious that the question of India's freedom should be accepted as a cardinal principle to be achieved by Germany during the war and the members of Reichstag should be made to appreciate the importance of India as a free country, and if possible should therefore be interested in the question of India's freedom.<sup>39</sup>

### References

1. Memoranda on the "Internal Situation in India on the Eve of the War," Chamberlain Papers. N.A.I.  
 Besides the Indian revolutionaries, the Irish nationalists also had a similar belief and on the outbreak of the war approached the German Government for arms and ammunition for creating a revolution in their country and to overthrow the British Government. For details about Irish nationalists and Germany during the war see Dennis Gwynn, *The Life and Death of Roger Casement* (London, n.d.).
2. "Memorandum on Anti-British agitation in England Part III". F.D. Confidential B General 1913, No. 13. N.A.I.
3. Report D.C.I., 25 Sept. 1909. H.P. B, Oct. 1909, Nos, 110-117. N.A.I.
4. *San-Francisco Call*, 2 October 1915. Foreign Office, 115/1908/1914. In the very first issue of the *Ghadr* dated 1 November 1913, under the heading "Germany and Ireland will unite : Germany will make war on England", it was mentioned "when the war breaks out between Germany and England fortune will smile on those nations that are now being ruined through English oppression. Indian should be on the lookout for this opportunity, lest this auspicious hour should come and pass without a rising in India." Quoted in J.C. Ker, op. cit., p.125.
5. Note W. Malleson, 7 May 1907. Foreign Department, Frontier, Confidential B, 1907, No. 17. N.A.I
6. H.A. Stuart note 13 June 1907. *ibid*.
7. Weekly Report D.C.I., 1 August 1908.  
 Home Political B, September 1908, Nos. 49-58. N.A.I.
8. Morley to Minto, 23 April 1908, Morley Papers. I.O.L.

9. Friedrich Von Bernhardt, *Germany and the Next War* (translated by Allan H. Powles 23rd impression, London, 1914), p. 96
10. Interview with Charles Cleveland, Director, Criminal Intelligence, as reported by Dewit Mackenzie, op. cit., p. 118.
11. Weekly Report D.C.I., 23 June 1914. Home Political B, July 1914, Nos. 124-28. The Pro-India Society also known as International Pro-Indian Committee, had Champakaraman Pillai as President, Dr Edward Briess as Vice-President, while Walter Strickland, Krishnavarma and Karl Eleibtreu were assessors. Ker, op. cit., p. 264. The committee was formed with the intention of influencing the German speaking world and to come closer to Germany. Har Dayal also lent his full support to the society and especially sent his thanks from Gstaad to the Non-Hindu colleagues whose donation had really made possible the existence of the journal. In the same letter Har Dayal had expressed his wish to have a "banquet revolutionaire" at Zurich. Har Dayal to C.R. Pillai, 31 May 1914. Home Political 9/V/1932. N.A.I.
12. Weekly report D.C.I. 20 October 1914.  
Home Political B, December 1914, Nos. 218-22. N.A.I.
- 12A. *ibid.*
13. According to Bhupendranath Datta, a proposal was also made by the Indian revolutionaries in the United States to the German ambassador for cooperation. The ambassador reacted favourably and passed on the proposal to his Government. R.C. Majumdar, *History of the Freedom Movement*, Vol. III (Calcutta, 1966), p. 404.
14. See A.C. Bhattacharya's Account, "Preparation in Berlin for the Liberation of India," H.F.M. No. M.R. 152. N.A.I.
15. Oppenheim to Har Dayal, 21 September 1914. German Foreign Office, Records Microfilm Copy, NAI, Roll No. 397. N.A.I.
16. Chattopadhyaya to Har Dayal, 24 October 1914.  
G.F.O. Records, Roll No. 397. N.A.I.
17. Ker, op. cit., p. 265. The Committee formed in Berlin was known as Indian Independence Committee, also called the Indian National Party, but popularly known as Berlin Indian National Committee. (Hereafter referred to as Berlin Committee).
18. Barkatullah to Har Dayal, 24 November 1914. G.F.O. Records, Roll No. 397. N.A.I.
19. Before the formation of the Indian National Party, the German Government constituted a committee on 3 September 1914 known as "The German Union of Friendly India," with Herr Alberecht as President, Baron Oppenheim and Sukhthankar Vice Presidents and Dhiren

Sarkar as Secretary. R.C. Majumdar, *op. cit.*, pp. 213-14. A.C. Bhattacharya, however, holds that the Committee formed on 7 September 1914 was known as 'The German Society of the Friends of India,' with Herr Albrecht Ballin, the General Manager of the Hamberg-America Steamer Line as its President, Herr Baron Von Oppenheim and Dr Sukhthankar as Vice-Presidents and Dhiren Sarkar as Secretary. Dr Muller was appointed liaison officer. A.C. Bhattacharya, *op. cit.*

20. "War Office memorandum on German Literary propaganda as regards India and the Orient" Home Political Deposite December 1916, No. 30. The Berlin Committee devoted much attention to propaganda against the British Government and by the middle of 1916 the Government of India prepared a list of nearly 82 leaflets and pamphlets published by them. *ibid.*
21. Chattopadhyaya to Reymond 18 July 1916, F.O. 371/2788/1916. PRO.
22. Weekly Report D.C.I. 22 June 1915. Home Political B, June 1915, Nos. 549-52. N.A.I.
23. German Foreign Office Records, Roll No. 397. N.A.I.
24. A.C. Bhattacharya's note, "Preparation in Berlin for the liberation of India." History of Freedom Movement Unit Collection, No. M.R. 152. N.A.I.
25. From Washington to Berlin (W. 402) 20 November 1914. Home Poll. F.No. 9/X/1932. N.A.I.
26. G.F.O., Roll No. 397. N.A.I.
27. From Berlin to Washington, 27 December 1914. Home Poll. K.W. 4 to F.N. 9/V/1932. N.A.I.
28. Quoted in Gilos T. Brown. "The Hindu Conspiracy and the Neutrality of USA., p. 16.
29. Weekly Report D.C.I. 17 August 1915. Home Political B, August 1915, Nos. 552-56. Lajpat Rai who was in the United States at that time mentions that the Indians who left the United States in 1914 to organise a rebellion in India were neither financed nor inspired by the Germans. See Lajpat Rai, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

It appears from the intercepted telegrams that the Berlin Committee had full knowledge about the activities of the Ghadr party and were sending messages to the United States for organising the movement and to make preparations for the despatch of arms to India. In November 1914 had asked even for the services of Barkatullah, Bhagwan Singh and Tara Singh at Berlin, but it was only towards the end of December, 1914 that concrete steps could be taken to bring the Ghadr party under its control. See Berlin Committee's proposals

- for work in America dated December, 1914, G.F.O. 398 Telegram from Berlin to Washington, 11 November 1914, Telegram from Washington to Berlin, 20 November 1914. Home Political F. No. 9/V/1932. N.A.I.
30. Trial Records—United States of America vs. Franz Bopp, p. 16. Typescript copy, I.O.L. (in future referred to as Trial Records).
  31. *ibid.*
  32. Ker, *op. cit.*, p., 272.
  33. "Statement of Naik Mohammad Khan", a prisoner of war in Germany. Home Political F.No. 9/V/1932. N.A.I.
  34. Weekly Report D.C.I., 24 February 1919. Home Political B, February 1919, Nos 181 84. N.A.I.
  35. Appendix IV, "A Manifesto to the Indian National Party." Many other pamphlets were brought out by the Berlin Committee, but perhaps the most damaging in its indictment of the British rule was *Why India is in Revolt Against British Rule* (London, 1916).
  36. Berlin Committee to German Foreign Office, 17 December 1915. G.F.O. Records, Roll No. 398. N.A.I.
  37. Chandra Chakravarty, *New India* (Calcutta, 1940), p. 28.
  38. Zimmermann to Indian Independence Committee, 19 December 1915. G.F.O. Records, Roll No. 398. N.A.I.
  39. Indian Independence Committee to Baron Wesendonk 17 January 1916. German Foreign Office, Roll No. 364. There is no evidence to show that the Berlin Committee succeeded in achieving this. The German Foreign Office records are silent on this issue.

## Indo-German Schemes in the Far East

### Shipment of arms to India

Haramba Lal Gupta went to the United States with full powers to coordinate the activities of the Ghadr Party with that of the Berlin Committee. He was also instructed to train and arm Indian workers on the borders of Siam for the coming revolution in India. His special assignment, however, was to assist Indians in India for organising the successful revolt and to arrange for the reception in India of necessary money and arms.<sup>1</sup> The British Foreign Office, however, suspected that the underlying motive of Germany was to foment trouble in China, Siam and the Shan States in order to distract the Allies' attention. With this end in view, the German Foreign Office entrusted this task to Gupta and other Indian revolutionaries in that area.<sup>2</sup> Immediately on his arrival Gupta started preparations for the shipment of arms and ammunition from the United States to India.

At the request of the Berlin Committee, the German Foreign Office placed 50,000 marks at the disposal of their agents in America for the purchase of arms to be sent to India.<sup>3</sup> The military attache, Frianz Von Papen at Washington, furnished the money in New York to Hauns Tauscher of the German embassy to purchase the arms to be despatched to San Diego on the Pacific Coast by the schooner *Annie Larsen* which was chartered from Martinez and Company. The cargo of the *Annie Larsen* consisted of about 10,000 old style Springfield rifles

(formerly of U.S. Army), the same number of bayonets and cartridges belts and 3,759 cases of approximately 4,000,000, .45 calibre cartridges. The *Annie Larsen* was a small and old vessel and was considered unsuitable for a long voyage.<sup>4</sup> After a complaint about its cargo from the British Consul at San Francisco it was thoroughly examined and was allowed to sail for Mexico on 8 March 1915.<sup>5</sup> To make the sailing of the vessel safe, the German Embassy publicized that the weapons were intended for Mexican revolutionaries.<sup>6</sup> According to the secret instructions sent by the German Foreign Office another steamer, *S.S. Maverick* was purchased through the instrumentality of F. Jabsen, an ex-German naval officer of the German Navy living at Los Angeles. The *Maverick* was to meet the *Annie Larsen* off the Socorro Island near the Mexican coast and to take the consignment of arms and carry it along *via* Anjer in Java to India.<sup>7</sup>

The *Maverick* was an oil-tanker and when it sailed it had no cargo and the personnel on board consisted of 25 officers and crew, a passenger named B. Miller and five Indian representatives of the Ghadr Party,<sup>8</sup> who were to communicate with the Indian revolutionaries in India and to assist in the landing of the arms. Hari Singh as head of the team was the only one who knew the purpose of the mission. H.C. Neilson was the captain and J.B. Starr-Hunt, a young American, was given the general charge of the operation. The *Maverick* reached the Socorro Island on 29 April 1915, where as arranged, she was to take the cargo from the *Annie Larsen*; the rifles were to be stowed away in one of the oil tanks and flooded with oil, and ammunition was to be stored in another tank and flooded only in case of emergency.<sup>9</sup>

Everything was done according to schedule. But on reaching Socorro Island the captain of the *Maverick* learnt to his surprise from four castaways that the *Annie Larsen* had waited and being short of water and supplies had returned to the coast of Mexico. He also received a note left for him by the supercargo of the *Annie Larsen* asking him to await its arrival.<sup>10</sup> The *Annie Larsen* failed to appear at the Socorro Island and after waiting for 29 days, the *Maverick* returned to San Diego, communicated with the owners in San Francisco and was ordered



to proceed to Hilo in the Hawaii Island. At Hilo on 11 June orders were received that *Maverick* should go to Johnson Island to meet *Annie Larsen* and to take the cargo and then proceed to the East Indies. Something went wrong somewhere for shortly before *Maverick* sailed on 21 June new orders were received by Starr-Hunt and a sealed cover from the German Consulate at Honolulu sent through Captain Deinot, Master of a German ship. The instructions to Starr-Hunt were not to take the cargo of the *Annie Larsen* but to send her back to the United States and to proceed to Batavia with the *Maverick*. The sealed letter was to be handed over to Emil Helfferich, head of the Straits and Sunda Company in Batavia. The sudden change in the mission of despatching arms to India by the *Maverick* was considered necessary because the whole scheme had leaked out,<sup>11</sup> and even a local newspaper reported that the arms and ammunition on the *Annie Larsen* and *Maverick* were meant for the Indians to be used for the overthrow of the British Government.<sup>12</sup> The press even gave the name of the consignee as one Von-Cliff of Batavia. Owing to these press reports, the entire plan was changed. Not only that the leakage of the whole scheme resulted in the seizure of the cargo of the *Annie Larsen* at the port of Hoquiam, Washington by the U.S. custom authorities. The *Maverick* proceeded towards Java without arms and reached Batavia on 21 July 1915. It was thoroughly searched by the Dutch authorities and was found empty. Starr-Hunt met Helfferich as instructed by the German High Command and requested him to dispose of it either by sale or charter as it had no arms. After aimlessly waiting for some time in Batavia, the Indians left for Bangkok to join the revolutionaries there, but were arrested on their way. Only Hari Singh escaped and worked with Helfferich for a number of years. Starr-Hunt later fell into the hands of the British in Singapore and Captain Neilson died at Yokohama on his way back to California.<sup>13</sup>

While the arms and ammunition were to be shipped from the United States, arrangements had been devised by the Berlin Committee for their secret landing in the Dutch East Indies. The operation was under the command of Helfferich and his brother Theodor Helfferich. The East Coast of Sumatra had

been selected as the most suitable place for depositing the arms and ammunition. The Berlin Committee persuaded the German Foreign Office to place the services of Vincent Kraft of the military department at their disposal.<sup>11</sup> Kraft who was well acquainted with the geographical situation in the Dutch East Indies was sent to Batavia as a special envoy to the German Consul-General. He carried a secret code and the plan of the General Staff for work "in favour of the Indian revolutionary movement" in the Far East.<sup>15</sup> The plan was to accumulate arms and ammunition at a secret place in Sumatra to be used at a proper time against the British Government in India. The German merchant vessels lying in the port of Sabang were to be deployed for this purpose.

Kraft on reaching Batavia contacted Helfferich and started implementing the plans. Helfferich considered the plan impracticable on account of the vigilance of the Dutch authorities; "besides it meant a blank violation of the Dutch neutrality."<sup>16</sup> Despite these difficulties, he agreed to put it into operation which further depended for its success on the response from the Indian revolutionaries in Bengal. Immediately after its formation, the Berlin Committee sent Dr Abhinash Chandra Bhattacharya to India to inform the Indian revolutionaries of the German help which was on its way in the shape of arms and money. The news of the actual scheme for the shipment of arms from the United States was brought to India in October 1915 by Jitender Nath Lahiri who told the Bengal revolutionaries to send an agent to Batavia to coordinate the plans.<sup>17</sup> For financial transactions between Calcutta and Batavia, two firms were selected, Harry and Sons in Calcutta and K.A.J. Chotirmall and Co. in Batavia.

Narendranath Bhattacharya (1889-1954) later better known as M.N. Roy, was deputed by the Bengal revolutionaries to go to Batavia, where he was to meet the Helfferich brothers and the German Consul and arrange among other things for money to be sent to India. Roy travelled under the assumed name of C.A. Martin and after contacting Helfferich, was able to send a large sum of money to India through Chotirmall and Co. The British Government suspected that "altogether 43,000 rupees were received in Calcutta of which the local revolutionaries

drew Rs. 33,000."<sup>18</sup> The rest of the amount was seized by the authorities.<sup>19</sup>

Helfferich informed Martin (M.N. Roy) that a cargo of arms and ammunition was on its way to Karachi to assist the Indians in the revolution. Martin, however, urged Helfferich to send instructions for the diversion of the ship to Bengal. After the completion of the negotiation Martin came back in June 1915. Immediately after his return the Indian revolutionaries started making plans to receive the cargo and employ it to the best advantage. There was great excitement amongst the Indian revolutionaries when it was known that "help was coming from abroad,"<sup>20</sup> and that "big events were to take place in December. This idea was so widespread that the revolutionaries considered it necessary to improve their organisation and increase their activities in order to be ready at the proper time."<sup>21</sup>

Meanwhile, the Indian revolutionaries in the Far East had in June 1915 sent Kumood Nath Mukerjee with a sum of 2,200 Ticals from Bangkok. Reaching Calcutta on 3 July 1915 he was to meet Jadu Gopal Mukerjee. Kumood Nath Mukerjee was sent back to Bangkok with a message for Helfferich in Batavia. He was to say that the 50,000 rifles, which Helfferich had promised were not all required for Bengal. Bengal needed only 15,000, the remaining rifles were to be sent to Karachi and some to a place near Pondicherry. The number of cartridges which Helfferich had promised was insufficient. He had arranged for 500 rounds per rifle and they needed 15,000. The three lakhs of rupees already promised should be sent quickly, for they were very much in need of money. Kumood Nath Mukerjee was also given a sealed letter for Helfferich and a slip of paper on which were enumerated the places in India at which arms were to be delivered. Besides Rai Mangal, the other places were Hatia, Balasore and Gokorni on the west coast in the Karwar District.<sup>22</sup>

Mukerjee on reaching Batavia met Helfferich. It appears that Helfferich and his colleagues had collected enough arms despite the failure of the *Maverick* and he told Mukerjee :

**Look here, my man, we have arms and money enough lying about, but how are you going to ship them. If you can make**

**your own arrangements, you are quite welcome to take any quantity you like.**<sup>23</sup>

After receiving information from their agents and especially from Kraft the British authorities had taken "fairly extensive naval and military precautions in Burma, in the Bay of Bengal and in the neighbourhood of Calcutta, Karachi and Andamans."<sup>21</sup> Not only that, the police in India arrested a number of revolutionaries in August 1915. W.R.D. Beckett, the British Consul-General in Batavia also met the Governor-General of the Netherland East Indies and apprised him of the activities of the German and Indian revolutionaries against Britain. He was assured of all possible help. They promised not to allow the Netherland East Indies as a base of operations against the friendly territory of British India.<sup>25</sup> The arrests in India completely upset the plans. It now became necessary to discuss fresh plans with the Germans, and with this object, M.N. Roy set out again for Batavia, accompanied by Phanindra Nath Chakravarti. Roy and Chakravarti met Helfferich a second time in Batavia. Helfferich did not show much enthusiasm about the fresh schemes. Roy abandoned the Batavia scheme and eventually succeeded in reaching Shanghai. Despite the failure of the *Maverick* enterprise and the vigilance of the British, Helfferich did not stop his help to the Indian revolutionaries. He sent a large amount of money to Calcutta, "30,000 Guilders, probably more", for the purchase of arms and ammunition in India.<sup>26</sup>

The Germans made another desperate attempt to ship arms to India from the Philippines which was considered as a safe source of supply and a convenient spot. For this purpose, two German Americans, Albert Wehde and George Paul Boehm accompanied by some members of the Ghadr party proceeded to Manila from San Francisco. They were instructed to charter a ship with the ostensible intention of going on a trip for sport, but actually to convey arms to Bangkok and India. On pursuance of this plan they chartered the motor schooner *Henry S.* Just before it sailed an attempt was made to transfer arms to the *Henry S.* from the *Sachen* and the *Shevia*, two German ships. The attempt, however, was foiled by the US custom

officials after having received the information.<sup>27</sup>

Linked with the shipment of arms and ammunition was another futile scheme which had been entrusted to Kraft about the capture of the Andaman Islands with the Indian revolutionaries. According to the scheme, an agent was to go to the Andamans in the guise of a merchant and to land arms supplied from German sources there; he was then to get into touch with the released prisoners and arrange with them to destroy the wireless station on an appointed night. The Indian revolutionaries in Sumatra were to sail on a ship from Sabang with German officers and to reach Nicobar Islands where they were to pick up "quick-fires", guns and ammunition and then to proceed to the Andamans so as to arrive there on the night fixed for the destruction of the wireless station. After this had been done and the place had been captured, the prisoners who were fit for fighting were to join the revolutionaries in their fight against the British Government. Kraft had in his possession the detailed maps of the Andamans and the list of the names of the Indian revolutionaries confined there. The scheme was never put into execution on account of two reasons. In the first place, even before he discussed the scheme with the Indian revolutionaries Kraft had revealed it to the British authorities at Singapore, and secondly, the Berlin Committee had sent instructions that the scheme was not to be undertaken until the smuggling of arms into India had been arranged,<sup>28</sup> which as described earlier was never accomplished. In spite of repeated failures, the revolutionaries did not abandon all hopes of getting arms to India though they gave up the idea temporarily of obtaining a consignment from the United States. There were other sources of supply in the Far East and strenuous efforts were made for collecting arms and conveying them clandestinely to India.<sup>29</sup> Helfferich also made the last desperate attempt to send 100,000 Guilders to India. The money was to be paid to a battalion of the Indian army in Calcutta as part payment for their services in the proposed revolution, and Helfferich for this difficult task selected a trustworthy Chinese, Ong Sin Kwie, his own former assistant. In the words of Helfferich, "He was much attached to me. The addresses in Calcutta were given to him written with invisible ink, which he could develop when in Calcutta.

The money he took along was 10,000 Guilders in cash and 90,000 Guilders in bank cheques. Everything was done most secretly. The only route to Calcutta was via Singapore. When the Dutch steamer with Ong Sin Kwie on board reached Singapore harbour, a steam launch came at once alongside with military police and they seized the Chinaman and the money."<sup>30</sup>

The news about the departure of the Chinaman was given to the British authorities by Kraft and after the arrest of Ong Sin Kwie the Officer Commanding Straits Settlement, informed the Governor :

**He fortunately for Emil Helfferich this scheme failed and Sin Kwie fell into my hands I compelled him to cash the drafts and I now have money in my possession. Emil Helfferich came to know of this and was much disturbed.**<sup>31</sup>

There is no doubt that the German Foreign Office made repeated efforts to provide the Indian revolutionaries with arms and money but they failed on account of a number of reasons. The main German object in the considered opinion of the British Foreign Office was to bring about a successful revolt in British India and thus hasten the desired and expected collapse of the British Empire. For the success of this design, the German Government devised measures to supply revolutionaries in India with arms and ammunition from outside India. The German Government and its responsible officials undertook the responsibility for the supply if the revolutionaries on their part would make arrangements for the reception of the arms in India.<sup>32</sup> It was not an easy task; with the British maintaining effective blockade of Germany, there was no chance to smuggle German-made arms. In addition the British control of the high seas furnished a barrier for obtaining arms from neutral countries. Despite these hurdles, the German Foreign Office took the risk of sending arms from the United States.<sup>33</sup> According to the findings of the US Department of Justice the failure of the original scheme to land the *Annie Larsen* arms in India was due entirely to bad luck and poor technique, but every subsequent attempt to remedy this initial failure was frustrated by the United States authorities. The arms of the *Annie Larsen*

and the *Henry S.* were seized by the custom authorities. These two seizures, apart from anything else, caused the complete failure of the enterprise.<sup>31</sup>

Other attempts made from the Dutch East Indies by the German representative Helfferich were ultimately thwarted by the British authorities after receiving information from Kraft and Mukerjee who were their agents.<sup>35</sup> As regards the activities of the Indian revolutionaries in India, in their main task to make arrangements for the reception of arms, to mobilize their adherents in preparation for a general rising, if possible, and to gain over the allegiance of Indian troops, their attempts were completely frustrated by the British authorities. In the opinion of the Director of Criminal Intelligence though their attempts failed to do really great things with the assistance of the German leaders money and arms, still the Bengal revolutionaries were quite successful in their internal schemes for hampering the administration of the country, for extending widely their own members and for checkmating the plans of the Government for their repression or reconciliation.<sup>36</sup> Later on attempts were made to send arms and ammunition from Japan through the overland route from Ta-li-foo to Assam, but hardly any success was achieved.

### **Siam-Burma Scheme**

Closely linked with the scheme for the supply of arms to the Indian revolutionaries in India was the project of establishing in Siam a centre for the anti-British activities and as a base from where to penetrate into Burma. Even before the beginning of the war Siam had been selected for propaganda purposes and the *Ghadr* newspaper was freely circulated there. The Indian National Party selected Siam for certain specific advantage which it offered. Siam's geographical proximity to India gave the best opportunity for the successful operation of the scheme. In Siam there were a number of Sikhs and some Muslims who had been trading there for many years and were willing to join the Indian revolutionary movement. The rugged borderland of Siam with Burma also afforded facilities for the collection of arms and the training of troops by German

instructors such as were available nowhere else in the proximity of the Indian subcontinent.<sup>37</sup>

The main scheme was that Indians from the Far East and America were to assemble upcountry near the borders of Siam and Burma, from there they were to proceed across the frontier and secure the cooperation of the Burmese military police, half of whom were Sikhs and North Indian Muslims, and with their assistance to gain possession of the whole province of Burma.<sup>38</sup> Its success depended very much on the supply of arms by the Germans and the capture of the Andaman Islands.<sup>39</sup>

The Berlin Committee sent Jodh Singh Mahajan to San Francisco with detailed instructions for the implementation of the scheme.<sup>10</sup> The Ghadr Party had already sent Sohan Lal Pathak (1883-1916) and Santokh Singh early in 1915 to find out the possibilities of instigating the Indians in the Burmese military police. They established their headquarters at Pakoh in Northern Siam. After long negotiations between Baron Von Reisswitz, German Consul-General at Chicago, and Gupta and other members of the Ghadr Party, three Germans were especially selected to proceed to Siam to act as military instructors and locate secret places for the safe-keeping of arms and ammunition. They were George Paul Boehm, Henry Schultz alias Sterneck, and Albert Wehde. Early in May 1915, two other members of the Ghadr Party from California viz., Sukumar Chatterjee and Darisi Chenchiah were instructed to proceed to Bangkok to recommend the places where all these operations were to be carried out after a preliminary survey of the area on the Siam-Burma border and to submit photographs for approval. In this task they were to take the help of German railway officers and Indians in Siam.<sup>11</sup>

Jodh Singh Mahajan accompanied by the three Germans sailed for Siam, while Sukumar Chatterjee and Darisi Chenchiah left by a different vessel in May 1915. The British authorities in Burma and Siam were fully aware of the activities of the Indian revolutionaries. Before the war broke out the *Ghadr* was already in circulation in Burma and according to the Government report it was "beginning to have some effect over the people of Burma". The effect was heightened with the arrival in October 1914 of the Ghadrites aboard the *Tosa Maru* at



Rangoon. During their stay, the Ghadrites visited nearly all the military barracks and also tried to tamper with the 66th Punjab Regiment and 130th Baluch Regiment which had been recently transferred to Rangoon. The Government of Burma with great difficulty suppressed the rising in the regiment in January 1915. For the first few months of 1915 matters were very much unsettled in Burma.<sup>12</sup>

In spite of the critical situation, the Lieutenant-Governor of Burma sent an encouraging note to Hardinge in June 1915 saying that there was no sign of disaffection among either the native troops or the military police. In his view it was very doubtful whether success would attend the machinations of the Indian revolutionaries and in any case since the authorities in Burma and Siam were fully aware of them, the chances of their success were remote.<sup>13</sup>

However, in view of the impending danger the Government of Burma adopted strict measures on the frontiers. Special surveillance was introduced and orders were issued for the arrest of every Indian coming from Siam and to deal with him under the Foreigners Act.<sup>14</sup> To make it more effective additional officers were deputed to the frontier posts. The optimism of the Lieutenant-Governor of Burma was not shared by the Director of Criminal Intelligence, who was of the view that the scheme of the Indian revolutionaries for creating trouble in Burma through the military police was evidently feasible, since it was difficult to foretell with certainty the feelings and actions of Indians of the martial classes serving far away from their homes and at the same time when the majority of the Sikhs in the Far East, not in the army, had been very badly corrupted by the doctrines of the Ghadr Party.<sup>15</sup> But the Government of India relied on the steps taken by the Burmese authorities. In the presence of these restrictions Indian revolutionaries continued their propaganda for the seduction of the army and copies of the *Ghadr* and another leaflet entitled "A Message of Love to Military Brethren" were freely distributed. The leaflet warned the men of the military police to be cautious and

**not to be tempted by the medals and badges of slavery, but**

**to throw them away. Wash out the old stains of servitude and adorn their breasts with the insignia of freedom.**<sup>46</sup>

Sohan Lal along with Hassan Khan and Harnam Singh made efforts to instigate the men of the military police, but in April 1915 Harnam Singh was arrested at Moulmein on his way back to Siam, while Sohan Lal and Hassan Khan left for the interior. Sohan Lal tried at Myamyo to persuade the men of the Mountain Battery to revolt but was betrayed and handed over to the British authorities. He was put on trial under the Defence of India Act and executed in Mandalay in February 1916. Two other parties of the Ghadrites who tried to enter Burma from Siam were also captured by the British and were convicted and tried in two Mandalay conspiracy cases.<sup>47</sup>

The Indian revolutionaries in Siam also had to face serious difficulties. As early as December 1914 the British Charge d' Affaires in Bangkok had informed the Siamese Government about the circulation of the *Ghadr* and the latter had agreed to take suitable measures. The Siamese authorities further agreed not to permit the use of their territory as a base for conspiracy against a friendly neighbouring power. The arrival of Sohan Lal in Siam in March 1915 was immediately communicated to the Siamese Government and they were requested to "give this matter their urgent attention."<sup>18</sup>

Another Ghadr leader Shiv Dayal Kapoor came from Shanghai to Bangkok in June 1915 to work with Jodh Singh Mahajan. Shiv Dayal on his arrival met Dr Von Remy, the German Charge d' Affaires at Bangkok. After making arrangements in Bangkok, Shiv Dayal alongwith Santokh Singh left for Pakoh, the place which had been selected for the collection of arms and ammunition. To impart military training to the Indians, Sterneck was already there. The Government of India was fully apprised by their representatives in Bangkok and Singapore of the activities of the Indian revolutionaries. Brigadier-General Houghton from Singapore informed them "to stop the import of arms into Siam". This was necessary as the collection of arms by Indians in Siam was steadily proceeding and was likely to increase so long as there

was no check on the import of arms in Siam.<sup>19</sup> After discussions amongst the various officers of the Government of India, the suggestion of the Director of Criminal Intelligence was accepted. He recommended the despatch of D. Petrie, an Intelligence Officer, to pick up information regarding the Indian revolutionaries in Siam and the Dutch East Indies, and to co-operate with the local English officials. At the same time strict watch was kept on the movement of any ships carrying arms and ammunition to the Dutch East Indies, Siam, Hongkong or Straits Settlement. The Intelligence Officer was to keep them informed in every possible way regarding the Indian revolutionaries and to "smash up Siam as a sedition centre".<sup>20</sup> Petrie left for Singapore, arriving there on 18 August 1915. Meanwhile in Bangkok, the British Minister had placed before the Siamese Foreign Minister all the information about the activities of the Indians and had requested him to arrest the leading members "at once with a view to having them deported."<sup>21</sup>

The Siamese Minister immediately assented and on 2 August 1915 the police arrested Jodh Singh Mahajan, Shiv Dayal Kapoor, Thakur Singh and Balwant Singh. Two days later Darisi Chenchiah and Sukumar Chatterjee were also arrested. They were deported to Singapore where Jodh Singh Mahajan turned an approver and gave all the information about the schemes of the Indian revolutionaries.<sup>22</sup>

The Government of India was much pleased on receiving the information about the arrest of the Indians. The Director of Criminal Intelligence regarded the arrest of the six Indians, who had been deported by the Siamese Government to Singapore, as "a triumph of diplomacy" on the part of the British Minister at Bangkok. It was a triumph, no doubt, because these arrests resulted in upsetting the main scheme of the Indian National Party. Still it did not diminish the danger of attack from Burma, as it was known to the British Minister that the Indian revolutionaries were busy in the interior of Siam and their plan was to make an attack at Kengtung in view of the small garrison in that place and then to advance to Burma capturing the arms and treasuries, which they might come across in the former state.<sup>23</sup> It was also

suspected that the Indians had succeeded in despatching a party with arms and ammunition towards the Burmese frontier. The British Minister Dering referred to the seriousness of the situation created by the activities of the Indian revolutionaries to the Siamese authorities and pointed out that

**the situation, though serious, was not so dangerous as the Government of India could not cope with so long as the party-members continued to arrive in isolated groups and so long as these groups could be prevented from uniting and organising in India.**

**But a new and more difficult situation might arise if Ghadr Party, after assembling in some adjacent country, were in a position to collect sufficient of their numbers to make an armed incursion into India.**<sup>54</sup>

He further mentioned that the activities of the Indians in Siam were likely to lead to results which might prove as deplorable from the point of view of Siam as of Great Britain, and submitted the list of ten persons who were to be arrested immediately. The Siamese Government wholeheartedly cooperated in rounding up most of the Indians in both Northern and Southern Siam. They further took steps to prohibit the importation of arms and ammunition in Siam and placed restrictions on the movement of Indians living there. With the consent of the British Government, the Siamese authorities reserved the right of granting travel facilities in the Interior to only those Indians who had obtained a passport from the Siamese Ministry.<sup>55</sup>

On the friendly and efficient cooperation of the Siamese Government, the Director of Criminal Intelligence commented:

**I don't know whether the Foreign Office will appreciate as fully as we do the benefits which have accrued to India through the attitude of the Siamese Government, but I can safely say that the plots of perhaps the most dangerous body of Indian seditionists have received a very severe check.**<sup>56</sup>

The Foreign Office also promptly recognized the valuable

cooperation of the Siamese Government. In recognition of this help, the title of the "Knight Grand Commander of the Star of India" was conferred on the King of Siam.<sup>57</sup> By the end of 1916, Petrie could optimistically report that for the moment there was little unrest of a dangerous nature among Indians in Siam, though in certain quarters there were still smouldering embers of discontent. In his view the deportation and the Burma conspiracy trial had undoubtedly left a deep impression and no serious plotting was expected in this area in the immediate future.

The Indian revolutionary movement was practically crippled by the failure of both the schemes, i.e., the shipment of arms through the Dutch East Indies and the Siam-Burma plot. The failure was to a large extent due to the cooperative attitude of the Siamese and the Dutch authorities and "the vigilance of the Government of Burma."<sup>58</sup> The schemes were also badly organised and coordinated. Besides, the Indian revolutionaries suffered from difficulties of communication and control. The Indian leaders were bold and fairly capable men, but the Europeans associated with them were a poor lot. The real reason for the collapse of the schemes was the information supplied to the British officers first by Kraft and later by Jodh Singh Mahajan. After the breakdown of the scheme, the Indian revolutionaries made no further attempt to use Siam as a base for operation against the British in India. The entry of Siam into the war and the consequent internment of all mule enemy subjects limited the possibility of further machinations by the Indians to stir up sedition on the Siam-Burma border.<sup>59</sup>

#### **Later Activities of the Revolutionaries in the Far East**

The setback which the Indian revolutionaries suffered in Siam and the Dutch East Indies, however, did not deter them from reorganising their movement in the Far East. All efforts were now made to make Japan an active centre for anti-British propaganda and to send arms to India by the overland route through China. In August 1915, the Berlin Committee sent H.L. Gupta to "Shanghai, Batavia and Japan for the purpose of preparing a report on the progress" of the schemes

in the Far East and with the ultimate object of purchasing arms and ammunition in Japan. Gupta went to Japan first and there contacted Rash Behari Bose, who had fled from India after the collapse of the February 1915 revolution.<sup>69</sup>

But even before the arrival of Gupta and Rash Behari Bose, Japan was a strong base of the Indian nationalists. An Oriental Youngmen's Association was formed by a few Indian students in 1900 with the object of facilitating the cultivation of friendship between the Japanese and the Indians and other Oriental students studying in Japan and to help the latter in their careers while in that country. The British representative in Japan, however, attached "very little political significance" to this association but the Government of India took serious notice of the anti-British writings of some of its members in the Japanese press.<sup>71</sup> Curzon, then Viceroy, after having received reports from the British representative, "greatly deprecated the practice of sending" Indian students to Japan where they were "likely to become imbued with sentiments tending towards discontent and even disloyalty". As a matter of policy it was decided that in future students going to Japan were to provide "before their departure from India, with a certificate of identity signed by a responsible officer."<sup>72</sup> This restriction resulted in the slackening of the flow of the students to Japan. But after the Russo-Japanese war there was a large influx of Indian students into Japan and some of them went to China. This gave a fillip to the activities of the Indo-Japanese Association which was in existence since 1903. Another association in Japan consisting mainly of Indian students was known as the Hindustan Association of Japan, but not much is known about its activities. Even in the pre-war years, some of the Japanese had shown their sympathies towards the Indian national movement. The British Government took strong objection to the speech of Count Okuma, former Prime Minister of Japan, before the Kobe Chamber of Commerce on 2 November 1907, when he said that "the three hundred millions of Indians who were oppressed by the Europeans were looking for protection of Japan from the oppression of Europe. Indians were fomenting an agitation for boycott of European goods and if the

Japanese failed to avail themselves of the opportunity they were disappointing the Indian people.”<sup>63</sup>

In 1910 Barkatullah (1859-1927) was sent to Japan with the object of starting an anti-British centre there. Barkatullah proceeded to Japan as Professor of Hindustani Language at Tokyo University.<sup>61</sup> Immediately after his arrival Barkatullah took over the publication of a monthly paper, *The Islamic Fraternity*, which gave him a convenient vehicle to propagate his ideas. The object of the journal was to enlighten non-Muslim public on the principles of Islam.<sup>65</sup> Under Barkatullah's editorship the tone of the *Islamic Fraternity* became more anti-British and pan-Islamic. After the Balkan Wars, Barkatullah vigorously started exposing the secret designs of the British in Persia and Afghanistan, and advocated the idea of a pan-Islamic alliance, with Afghanistan at its head which he regarded as the “future Japan of Central Asia.”<sup>66</sup>

In order to strengthen the hands of Barkatullah, Ram Nath Puri also paid a visit to Japan and contacts were established with various associations, viz., the Asiatic Society of Japan, the Indo-Japanese Association, etc.

Barkatullah's propaganda was specially meant for Muslims whom he wanted to follow in the footsteps of the Indian revolutionaries and if possible to collaborate with them for the expulsion of the British. In order to achieve this objective many pamphlets were issued from Japan. One pamphlet *Akhir-ul-Hilasaiifa* (the sword is the last resort) referred to the atrocities in the Balkan Wars and the other misfortunes of the Muslims. Muslims were called upon to form secret societies and to annihilate the oppressive British who were plundering India.<sup>67</sup> In another pamphlet to the “Muhammedans in all parts of India” Barkatullah again appealed for the establishment of a secret society of Union and Progress, “the centre of which could be outside of India in some liberty loving country. The branches of the society should be spread throughout the length and breadth of India. Its belief should be that the English were our mortal enemies and that to turn them out of India was the religious duty of Muhammadans.”<sup>68</sup>

The anti-British campaign carried on by Barkatullah and

other Indians in Japan, however, did not go unnoticed. The Government of India observed that Barkatullah was "a sort of connecting link between three different movements, namely, the Pan-Islamic, Asia for Asiatics and the Indian sedition. The common aim of all these movements was the release of Asia, in which was included Turkey, from European domination."<sup>69</sup> They regarded the anti-British movement in Japan—a country with whom they were in close alliance—as highly objectionable and detrimental to their interests in the Far East.<sup>70</sup> All the facts regarding the activities of the Indians in Japan were sent to the Secretary of State for India in order "that a representation should be made on the subject to the Japanese Government". Barkatullah, however, stopped the publication of the *Islamic Fraternity*, before the Japanese Government passed orders. Soon after Barkatullah started another paper *El Islam* to continue his political propaganda though under the nominal editorship of his friend Hasan Hatano.<sup>71</sup> The Government of India this time sent a strong protest note in which the Japanese Government was asked to deal with Barkatullah in a suitable manner.<sup>72</sup> The Japanese Government diplomatically handled the issue and gave a mild warning to Barkatullah. Privately, the British Ambassador was informed that Barkatullah's contract on its expiry at the end of March 1914 would not be renewed.<sup>73</sup>

After the termination of his contract with the Tokyo University, Barkatullah alongwith Bhagwan Singh left for America to take part in the activities of the Ghadr Party.<sup>74</sup> By the time Barkatullah left Japan, the Indian cause had won the sympathy of many Japanese and Indian residents there. During the war, when the members of the Ghadr Party began their march towards India, Japan proved to be a very convenient halting place. In the words of the British Vice-Consul at Yokohama though there did not exist in Japan any organised seditious society such as the one in San Francisco or the branch of the society now actively working in Manila, nevertheless it was quite apparent that the Indian revolutionary movement had a very large number of sympathisers among the numerous Indian merchants, students and others residing then in Japan.<sup>75</sup>

Anti-British propoganda was intensified in Japan with the arrival of Gupta, Rash Behari Bose, Kesho Ram Sabarwal and



others during 1915. The presence of these prominent Indians in Japan and their activities were viewed by Delhi and Whitehall as quite damaging to the prestige of the British Government. Reviewing the antecedents of the revolutionaries, the Director of Criminal Intelligence recommended to the Government that a representation for the deportation especially of Gupta and Rash Behari Bose should be made to the Japanese authorities. The reply of Conygham Greene, the British Ambassador in Japan was not very encouraging. He wrote that

**the Japanese Government will not arrest persons, Indians or others accused of merely political crimes such as sedition. If proof can be given that they are working in connection with the Germans, they might deport them.**<sup>76</sup>

Immediately the Government of India sent the evidence against both. In spite of the representation to "deport, extradite or place on trial the Indians in question" no action was taken and Greene reported that "in spite of almost daily interviews between members of my staff and a representative of Japanese Foreign Office, obstacles were being raised by the Ministry of Justice and no decision could be obtained". He further intimated that

**I begged Minister for Foreign Affairs to remember that we look to Japan as our ally to help us to maintain general peace in India under alliance and I asked him to press his colleagues to take a Statesman's view of the request of the Government of India. His Excellency promised to do his best.**<sup>77</sup>

After repeated requests by the British Ambassador the Japanese authorities at last consented to the deportation of Gupta and Rash Behari Bose. The orders for their deportation were issued.<sup>78</sup> As soon as the orders were known, the Japanese press "without a single exception criticised severely the action of the Minister" and denounced this as the violation of the right of asylum to political refugees so much honoured and

respected by the European nations and in the words of Gupta,

**at the eleventh hour Mr. Toyama, leader and political boss of Japan saved us in the face of all possibilities of his being persecuted and arrested by the police.<sup>79</sup>**

Both Gupta and Rash Behari Bose were given shelter by Mitsuru Toyama, a great political figure in Japan at that time, and the Japanese police could never catch hold of them. The British representative in Yokohama admitted the failure and even referred to

**the remarkable interest, amounting to openly expressed sympathy by a section of the Japanese people in the Indian revolutionary movement and the extraordinary reluctance of the Government itself to take any effective steps to check or suppress the activities of wellknown Indian revolutionaries and their propaganda in Japan, even when earnestly requested to do so by the British authorities, has been so marked that it is difficult to repress a certain feeling of apprehension as to what the ultimate object of Japan's present policy towards India may be.**

In his view the main motive for the Japanese interest in the Indian revolutionary movement was the conviction that an upheaval in India might, if the opportunity were utilized, lead to far-reaching results highly beneficial to Japan.<sup>80</sup> A.M. Cardew, from the Department of Commercial Intelligence, however, had a different view. In his opinion the Japanese one and all were imbued with the necessity of pushing on Japan's commercial and political influence in India by all and any means which might show prospects of definite advantage. It was to achieve this that they were actively supporting the Indian revolutionaries.<sup>81</sup>

After the failure of the above negotiations for deportation of the Indians, Japan was looked upon by them as a safe asylum and a convenient base for plotting against the British. The reports of the British Ambassador were sufficiently disturbing for the Government of India

and gave an indication of the failure of their diplomacy in Japan, which needed careful study of the Japanese policy in Asia *vis-a-vis* their own interest in that region. The report of their Intelligence Officer, Petrie, also confirmed the views expressed by the British Ambassador that there was no doubt that the Indian revolutionary party in Japan had received direct and indirect encouragement from the Japanese and had enjoyed complete immunity and were encouraged to look upon Japan as the champion of Asiatic races against the White, more particularly the English, and that disloyal Indians would be able to use Japan "as a base for the hatching of plots against us". As regards the policy to be adopted by the Indian Government, Petrie completely discarded the idea of making any fresh representation, but recommended that

**it will be to our advantage to know as much as we can of the doings of Indian revolutionaries while they are on Japanese soil and to watch the course of this alliance between them and the Japanese people.<sup>82</sup>**

Endorsing the views of Petrie, Craddock, the Home Member, also commented that there was no doubt that Japanese ambitions were going to be a serious danger to the Indian Empire in days to come. His belief was that things would have been much quieter in India during the last ten years had Japan met defeat from Russia. It was Japan's victory that first started the idea of "*swaraj*" in India.<sup>83</sup>

Meanwhile Gupta went back to USA and reported to the Berlin Committee that

**the Japanese public is unquestionably for India. The Government is more or less out of a policy, pro-British, but even among high officials representing army, navy and the Cabinet, the majority are, at heart pro-India, and if carefully worked out we can expect great results from the cooperation of the Japanese.<sup>81</sup>**

The direction of India affairs in the United States after February 1916 was in the hands of Chakravarty, who instead of

exploiting popular enthusiasm in Japan formulated another scheme pertaining to the shipment by an overland route to India of arms and ammunition to be purchased in Japan. To implement this scheme the Berlin Committee sent Tarak Nath Das with orders to work with a Chinese, Chen Ting Mo, who was to make "arrangements for the overland transmission of arms from China to India". However, according to the British Intelligence report, it appears that Das and Chen were not able to achieve anything practical in China.<sup>85</sup> The arms deal was a failure, but Tarak Nath Das succeeded in establishing branches of the pan-Asiatic League in China and Japan. Chakravarty had established this society in USA, the watchword of which was "Asia for the Asiatics". The pan-Asiatic movement as advocated by the Indian revolutionaries received an enthusiastic response in Japan and during his stay there Das did his utmost to influence the chauvinistic spirit of the Japanese among whom he moved as to imbue them with feelings of bitter hostility towards Great Britain.<sup>86</sup> Instead of working seriously for the scheme for the despatch of arms from Japan, Das devoted much of his time to propaganda work in furtherance of the pan-Asiatic movement in which field he was immensely successful. The aim of this society as viewed by the British was the expansion of Japan and it was aided by responsible Japanese officials and financed by the Japanese Government itself with the object of using the Indian revolutionaries and their schemes to further their own designs. Whatever might have been the motives, the society commenced its propaganda and was responsible for publishing a large number of anti-British books and pamphlets.<sup>87</sup>

With the entry of the USA in the war in 1917, the situation changed in the Far East. Das left Japan and was convicted in the San Francisco trial. The declaration of war by America as affecting the Philippines and Siam and the publication in China of the China (War Powers) Order in Council 1917, interposed between America and India a great belt of territory in which it became difficult for the emissaries of the Berlin Committee to travel freely or to engage in active plotting.<sup>88</sup>

Besides, the prosecution of the Indian revolutionaries by the United States in 1917 had a detrimental effect on the activities

of the Indian revolutionaries everywhere. The prosecuted revolutionaries were "the brain of the Ghadr movement" and the split in their ranks resulted in the slackening of the movement in the Far East and in other places. Another important factor which hampered the growth of the movement after 1918 was the closing down of the German and Austrian Consulates in Siam, China and the Philippines, which prevented the German Government from taking any active role in the shaping of the course of the Indian revolutionary movement in the Far East. From the report of the British Intelligence Officer we also learn that the Germans were also wearied of the intrigues and plottings in the Far East. Their agents had failed, disclosures had taken place, money had been lavishly spent and nothing had been achieved. Was it worthwhile, they had begun to ask, to persevere with schemes which so far had ended only in discredit, expense and failure.<sup>89</sup> By the beginning of 1911, in the words of the British Intelligence Officer, there was no possibility of

**any more manifestation of disloyalty on the part of the Indian Nationalists in the Far East amounting to the hatching of dangerous conspiracy against the British Government in India.<sup>90</sup>**

The anti-British propoganda continued in Japan. The British Vice-Consul at Yokohama no doubt reported that the official sympathy shown by the Japanese towards the revolutionary movement had slackened with the change of the Government, but he warned the authorities that "Japan will not willingly abandon her policy of secretly encouraging the Indian revolutionaries to free India from British rule because India would then offer to Japan a wider and less restricted field for commercial and political penetration." In the opinion of the British Intelligence Officer there was undoubtedly behind all this the restless and the grasping ambition of the Japanese nation, which was jealous of Britain's position of supremacy in the East and would gladly see her ousted from it.

The analysis of the above officer, no doubt, proved to be of little practical consequence but it was nevertheless based on the correct reading of the situation and it came out to be true

during the Second World War. He wrote that "there seemed to be little doubt that in aiding and abetting the Indian revolutionary movement, Japanese were anxious to conciliate Indians with the idea that at some time in the future their friendship towards Japan and their hostility towards England might prove useful in furthering ambitious schemes of Japanese national expansion."<sup>91</sup>

Taking note of the change, the Government of India was keen that fresh representation might be made to the Japanese Government for the deportation of the Indian revolutionaries. But the report from the British Ambassador was far from encouraging. He reported in November 1917 that even under the new government, the distribution of revolutionary literature had continued unchecked, that the attacks in the press on British rule in India were as frequent and virulent as ever and that the goodwill of the Japanese Government towards the Indian revolutionary movement was still the same.

In view of this, the Foreign Office was not prepared to take the risk of making any fresh representation to the Japanese Government which it feared would always meet with a determined opposition from the pan-Asiatic party.

The Government of India had given considerable thought to the question of Japanese interest in the Indian revolutionaries despite the existence of the Anglo-Japanese alliance. The British officials and Intelligence agents had kept a close watch on this trend in Japanese policy and were of the view that Britain must come to an understanding with Japan after the War as to this vital question. Cardew, however, was of the view that it was necessary to "bind Japan to ourselves, keep Germany outside and thus prevent a possible and dangerous combination of Japan and Germany. We shall not lose, I think by treating Japan very liberally and allowing her scope for development in Asia as one of the dominating nations. If we attempt to suppress her developments, we shall run the risk of her being thrown into Germany's arms and of her definitely developing her pan-Asiatic schemes which contain the germs of a serious danger for India and our other Asiatic possessions.

"By openly admitting her to a share of 'the Whiteman's burden' of developing the dormant commercial markets of those

Asiatic races who will not or cannot develop themselves, we shall render it very difficult for her to play her second role of would-be saviour of the oppressed Asiatic races.”

Cardew concluded his prophetic note by saying that should the post-war settlement be satisfactory to Japan, the question of Japanese encouragement of Indian revolutionaries will die a natural death and that too pretty speedily.<sup>93</sup>

The Government of India supported Cardew's point of view and hinted to the Secretary of State for India that at the close of the war it would be necessary to arrive at a distinct understanding as to “our own and Japanese interests in the Far East.” It was further suggested that in any possibility regarding the renewal of the Anglo-Japanese alliance, at least the clause pertaining to India might be deleted since on account of it the Indian Government had suffered a considerable “loss of prestige in the eyes of India itself.”<sup>94</sup> Meanwhile, the pan-Asiatic movement caught the imagination of the Japanese people and posed a serious threat to the British possessions in the East since the British Intelligence officer who studied it believed that there was now no doubt that Japan was working for a powerful oriental empire. The pan-Asiatic movement was a means by which to achieve this objective.<sup>95</sup>

But despite these developments, Japan remained loyal to her alliance with Britain partly because she was pledged to do so and partly because her leaders believed, despite the doubts of army generals and university professors, that Britain would win the War.<sup>96</sup>

The Japanese sympathy helped to a considerable extent the Indian revolutionaries to carry on their activities peacefully in Japan, but it did not bring any change in the situation as there was no active cooperation between the Indians and the Japanese, whether public or private, such as materialised during the Second World War. Rash Behari Bose became a Japanese citizen and during the Second World War established an Indian Independence League, and an Indian National Army was raised with Japanese collaboration.

### References

1. "Note on Indian Sedition in the U.S.A.," Home Political Deposit, May 1916, No. 16. N.A.I.
2. "War Office Memorandum on German Schemes in the Far East." F.O. 371/2784/1915. P.R.O.
3. Indian Independence Committee to German Foreign Office, 1 January 1915, German Foreign Office, Records, Roll No. 397. N.A.I.
4. "Memorandum on *Annie Larsen* and *Maverick*," U.S. Department of Justice Records, Roll No. 2. N.A.I.
5. "The Dutch East Indies and the Ghadr trial." F.O. No. 371/3425/1918. P.R.O.
6. Ismonger and Slattery, op. cit., p. 211.
7. "The Dutch East Indies and Ghadr trial." F.O. No. 371/3425/1918. P.R.O.
8. The names of the five Indians were Hari Singh, Harcharan Das Manggu Ram, Gambhir Singh, and Harnam Chand, but at the time of sailing they were registered under Persian names. U.S. Department of Justice Records, Roll No. 4. They joined the crew at San Pedro and not at San Francisco. Statement of George Stubb, F.D.S.W. June 1917. Nos. 1-46. N.A.I.
9. Ker, op. cit., p. 273.
10. "The Dutch East Indies and the Ghadr trial." F.O. No. 371/3425/1918. P.R.O.
11. It was also suspected that the Captain P.H. Schlutter of the *Annie-Larsen* who had a mistress in Mexico wasted his time and could not reach the Socorro Island in time to meet the *Maverick*. F.O. No. 371/3427/1918. P.R.O.
12. "Summary of San Francisco Trial," F.O. No. 371/3427/1918. P.R.O.
13. *ibid.* The British had information about the Indians who sailed on *Maverick* which was supplied to them by their agent Jagjit Singh Attawal. H.B.M.'s Minister, Bangkok to the Government of India, 16 Nov. 1915. Foreign Deptt. Conf. B, Ext. 1917, Nos. 26-54. N.A.I.
14. Berlin Committee to German Foreign Office, 28 April 1915, G.F.O. Records, Roll No. 397. N.A.I.
15. "Emil Helfferich Account Regarding the Activities of the Indian Revolutionaries in the Far East," NAI. (Hereafter referred to as Helfferich Account).



16. *ibid.*
17. Secretary Foreign Deptt. to H.G. Dering, 1 October 1915. Foreign Department, Secret War, June 1917, Nos. 1-46. N A.I.
18. C.R. Cleveland's Note on the German Indian Scheme, 21 Sept. 1915. Foreign Department, Secret War, June 1917, Nos. 1-46. N A.I.
19. By this time, the British had come to know of the transactions and the Indian Police sent two telegrams as a bait to the Indian revolutionaries in Batavia. In one telegram it was said "Send 10,000 Bags of Sugar quickly" and second mentioned that "market here fail take delivery good after two months". By these means, the British seized the money thus sent to India. C.R. Cleveland to Grant, 27 Nov. 1915. F.D. Conf. B External 1917, Nos 26-54, These telegrams were sent in reply to those of the Indian revolutionaries in Batavia.
20. *ibid.*
21. *ibid.* Hardinge wrote later that "it was ascertained that the proposed rebellion was to take place on Christmas day when all British military and civil authorities would be merry-making". See Lord Hardinge. *My Indian Years 1910-1916* (London, 1948), p. 128.
22. "Dutch East Indies and the Ghadr trial." F O. No. 371/3425/1918. P.R.O.
23. *ibid.*
24. C.R. Cleveland note on the German Indian Scheme 21 September 1915. Foreign Department, Secret War, June 1917, Nos. 1-46. Kumood Nath Mukerjee was a British spy and while on his way back he gave all the information to the British authorities at Singapore. Foreign Office, No. 371/2788/1916. For going to India as an emissary of the Indian revolutionaries he was paid huge sum of money by Shiv Dayal Kapur, Petrie note, 3 November 1925, Home Pol. F.No. 336/1925. N.A.I  
 Helfferich also had suspicion about Mukerjee and wrote later, "Mukerjee seemed to me rather suspect. I regarded him as a spy and did not meddle with him after the failure of the first scheme." Helfferich Account, op. cit.
25. Beckett to Grey, 6 Oct. 1915 Foreign Deptt. Conf. B External 1917, Nos. 26-84. N.A.I.
26. Helfferich Account, op. cit.
27. "Memorandum prepared by the War Office regarding German plots to smuggle arms into India" (hereafter referred to as Memorandum War Office). F.O. 371/2786/1916. The information about the departure of Henry S. was given by Kraft. Secretary of State to Viceroy 5 August 1915. F.D. S.W., June 1917, Nos. 1-46. N.A.I.
28. Berlin Committee to Foreign Office, 14 November 1915. German Foreign Office Records, Roll N. 398. N.A.I.

29. War Office Memorandum, Foreign Office No 371/2786/1916. P.R.O.
30. Helfferich Accounts, op. cit.
31. General Officer Commanding Straits Settlement to the Governor and C-in-C Straits Settlement, 8 January 1916. F.O. No 371/2785/1916. P.R.O.
32. Memorandum War Office, F.O. 371/2786/1916. P.R.O.
33. Giles T. Brown, op. cit., p. 24.
34. *Note on the Organisation of the Hindu-German Conspiracy*. U.S. Department of Justice Records, Roll No. 4 N.A.I.
35. About Kraft the British Consul-General informed Edward Grey on 2 December 1915: "The second Agent is the man, C.A. Vincent Kraft, whose journey to Shanghai by way of Singapore as a German Agent, I notified to the General Commanding the troops at Singapore and who after arrest and examination, admitted that he had fought against the Allies as a member of the German Army and was subsequently utilized by the General. He is now in Netherland East Indies and that I am aware of his movements and the character of the information. Kraft was known as Agent X to the British Foreign Office. Besides Kraft other Agents were Louis A. Reed and G.A.J. Nederveen Meerkarh, a Hollander." British COUNSUL-General Netherland East Indies to Grey, 2 December 1915, F.O. 371/2497/1915. P.R.O. The British intelligence Report dated 7 March 1917 says: "In August 1915 he (Kraft) divulged all plans to us for money and his information proved correct. He continued ostensibly to work for Germans, but in reality for General Officer Commanding Singapore." Later on Kraft went to Mexico and again reported to the British about the activities of the Indian revolutionaries there, F.O. No. 371/3065/1917. Helfferich also wrote later, "the question how the British came to know about Ong Sin Kwei mission has never been answered. But many years after the war was over, I learned that Kraft after leaving Java, had joined the British." Helfferich Account, op. cit. Two other agents who were giving information to the British regarding Indian revolutionaries in the Far East were Mathura Das and Rahim Bakhsh, who was specially operating for the British in Japan. See F.O. No. 371/2497/1915. P.R.O.
36. Note of D.C.I., 4 Feb. 1916 Home Political A, May 1916, No. 172. N.A.I.
37. "Proceedings of the Mandalay Conspiracy Case". Home Political A, September 1916, Nos. 403-10. N.A.I.
38. Note Indian Committee 29 April 1915. German Foreign Office Records, Roll No. 398. N.A.I.

39. See Section A above.
40. German Foreign Office Records, Roll No. 398. N.A.I.
41. Ker, *op. cit.*, p , 285.
42. Adamson to Hardinge, 25 June 1915. Home Political B, August 1915, Nos. 47-51. N.A.I.
43. *ibid.*
44. Govt. of Burma to Govt. of India, 7 July 1915. External B, Confidential, B, 1917, Nos. 148-356. N.A.I.
45. Note by C.R. Cleveland, Director of Criminal Intelligence, 26 June 1915, *ibid.*
46. Quoted in Ker, *op. cit.*, p. 291.
47. In the first Mandalay (Burma) Conspiracy Case 17 persons were tried. Seven were sentenced to death, five to transportation for life, one to seven years' rigorous imprisonment and four were acquitted. In the second case, only four were tried, three were sentenced to death, and one to transportation for life.
48. British Charge d' Affaires Bangkok to Govt. of India, 2 March 1915. Foreign Department, Secret War, July 1915, Nos. 252-59. N.A.I.
49. Note by A.H. Grant, 30 June 1915. Foreign Department, External B, Confidential B 1917, Nos. 148-356. N.A.I.
50. Note C.R. Cleveland, 27 July 1915. *ibid.*
51. British Minister, Bangkok to Govt. of India, 1 August 1915. *ibid.*
52. *ibid.*, 13 August 1915.
53. *ibid.*, 20 September 1915.
54. *ibid.* British Minister Bangkok to His Royal Highness Prince Devawongse, 7 September 1915.
55. They were Hussan Khan, Budh Singh, Gopal Singh, Chalia Ram, Amar Singh, Inder Singh, Mul Chand, Sita Ram, Sohan Lal and Santokh Singh. *ibid.*
56. Note D.C.I. "The German Sedition in Siam." 29 November 1915. F.O. 371/2784/1916. PRO.
57. Foreign Deptt. Ext. B, Conf. B Oct. 1918, Nos. 13-14. N.A.I.
58. "Note by D. Petrie on a recent tour in the Far East", 4 Dec. 1916, Foreign Department, External B, Confidential B, 1917, Nos. 75-76. Petrie's views were further confirmed by J. Crosby, the acting vice-consul at Chiangmai, who after the tour of the Northern frontier of Siam confirmed that there was no indication of anti-British activity

- now on the frontier. See J. Crosby to Secretary Foreign Deptt., 1 March 1917. Foreign Deptt. External B, Conf. 1917, Nos. 468-471. N.A.I.
59. H.G. Dering to A.J. Balfour 27 July 1917.  
Foreign Department, Secret External, May 1918, Nos. 153-61. N.A.I.
60. Weekly Report D.C.I. 14 December 1915 Home Political B, December 1915, Nos. 709-11. As a matter of fact Gupta did not get further than Japan, where he was detained by the authorities. "Note on German-Indian Conspiracy in America." Home Political A, February 1916, No. 201. N.A.I.
61. J.B. Whitehead to W. Cunnigham, 28 June 1900.  
Foreign Department, Internal B, September 1900. Nos. 276-79. N.A.I.
62. Note by Curzon 31 July 1905. Foreign Department, Internal B, August 1905, No. 420. N.A.I.
63. Foreign Department Secret External, March 1908, No. 179. N.A.I.
64. "History-Sheet of Muhammad Barkatullah of Bhopal." Foreign Deptt. Secret Internal, February 1914, Nos. 11-18. Barkatullah was appointed at Tokyo by the influence of Shyamaji. The appointment was obtained through the good offices of an Indian industrialist R.D. Tata, who had branches of his firm in Tokyo and Paris. The Indian revolutionaries in Paris approached R.D. Tata and persuaded him to nominate Barkatullah. C.R. Cleveland's note, 17 June 1912. Foreign Department, August 1912, Nos. 3-4. N.A.I.
65. *The Islamic Fraternity* was originally started by Fadli Bey, an Egyptian and before leaving Japan in 1910 he persuaded Barkatullah to carry on the paper. MacDonald to Grey, 15 Oct. 1912, F.D. Secret Internal, January 1913, No. 1 N.A.I.
66. "History-Sheet of Barkatullah," op. cit.
67. *ibid.*
68. Foreign Department, Internal B, May 1913, Nos 160-61. N.A.I.
79. "Memorandum on the German Connection with Indian sedition," 25 August., 1915. Home Political Deposit, October 1915, No. 43. N.A.I.
70. According to the terms of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, Japan was bound to help the Government of India in case of disturbances on the frontier or an invasion by a third Power. See Tarak Nath Das, *India in World Politics* (New York, 1924) and Peter Lowe, *Great Britain and Japan 1911-1915* (London, 1969).

71. R. Hughes-Buller's note, 9 May 1913. Foreign Department, Secret Internal, July 1913, No. 54. N.A.I.
72. Viceroy to Secretary of State, 19 June 1913. *ibid.*
73. British Ambassador in Japan to Hardinge, 1 February 1914. Home Political A, July 1914, Nos. 143-51. N.A.I.
74. Note by C R. Cleveland, 28 July 1914. Home Political A, August 1914, Nos. 7-16. N.A.I.
75. C.J. Davidson to Government of India, 26 April 1915. Home Political A, July 1915. Nos. 258-61. N.A.I.
76. British Ambassador in Japan to Viceroy, 9 October 1915, Home Political B, November 1915, Nos. 72-83. N.A.I.
77. British Ambassador in Japan to Viceroy, 21 October 1915 *ibid.*
78. They were ordered to leave Japan within five days. We learn from the account of Sabarwal that there were only two ships leaving Japan within those five days, one for Vladivostock and the other for Shanghai. It was a trap well planned. They would have been arrested and handed over to the British by the Tsarist Government of Russia had they gone to Vladivostock. In Shanghai, they would have fallen into British hands. Keshoram Sabarwal, A Reminiscence, in Radhanath Rath (Ed.), *Rash Bzhart Basu—His Struggle for India's Independence* (Calcutta, 1963), p. 550.
79. "H.L. Gupta's Report to the Berlin Committee," 12 September 1916. German Foreign Office Records, Roll No. 399. N.A.I.
80. Memo by C.J. Davidson, British Vice-Consul at Yokohama, 6 April 1916. Foreign Department, External B Confidential, 1917, Nos. 1-42. N.A.I.
81. A.M. Cardew's note, 11 December 1916. Foreign Department, Confidential B, External B, 1917, Nos. 75-76. N.A.I.
82. "Note by D. Petrie on recent tour in the Far East." Foreign Department, External B Confidential, 1917, Nos. 75-76. Petrie was deputed on a special mission to the Far East in 1915 to tackle the problem of Ghadr campaign and the German-Indian conspiracies, but especially to report on the Japanese policy towards India and the Indian revolutionaries. *ibid.*
83. R.H. Craddock note, 11 December 1916. Foreign Department, Confidential B External B, 1917. Nos. 75-76 N.A.I.
84. "H.L. Gupta's Report to the Berlin Committee," 12 September 1916. German Foreign Office Records, Roll No. 399. N.A.I.
85. "Report on Indian Sedition in the Far East, 1917," Foreign Department, External B Confidential, 1918, No. 21. N.A.I.

86. *ibid.* D. Petrie, however, commented that the fact that Chakaravarty might have first instituted a formal body known as Pan-Asiatic League, but the Pan-Asiatic movement was born long before Chakaravarty's League and Long survived that League. "Petrie's note of Pan-Asiatic Movement". Foreign Department, External Confidential B, 1918, Nos. 29-34. N.A.I.
87. India Office note on Japan's policy towards. India 1915-1917 F.D. Conf. B. Ext. Section B, 1917, Nos. 3-17. Some of the books brought out were Soong Tsung Faung's *Japan's Greatest Mistake*; Tarak Nath Das, *Isolation of Japan in World Politics*; Uchida, *A Solution of the Chinese problem and its danger to Anglo-Japanese Relations*.
88. The Order-in-Council authorised the British Minister in Peking to send to the Supreme Court a certificate to the effect that any British subject, who was suspected on reasonable grounds of conduct prejudicial to the public safety or interest should be deported from China. Many Indian nationalists under this order were arrested and deported. Foreign Department, External B, Confidential B, 1918, No. 21. N.A.I.
89. "Report on Indian sedition in the Far East 1917." Foreign Department, External B Confidential B, 1918, No. 21. N.A.I.
90. *ibid.*
91. *ibid.*
92. Foreign Office note, "Japan and Indian Situation." Foreign Deptt., Conf. B. Ext., 1919, Nos. 3-17. N.A.I.
93. A.M. Cardew's note, 3 October 1916. Foreign Deptt. Conf. A, External A, 1917, Nos. 1-42. N.A.I.
94. Viceroy to Secretary of State, 4 May 1917. *ibid.* The British Ambassador in Tokyo also recommended that "after the war when we emerge victorious and begin to discuss the post-bellum settlement for which the Japanese press is already clamouring. It will, I submit be indispensable for us to give this country to understand that there must be an end to Indian intrigues among politicians here and that we shall never allow these islands to be made a jumping place for revolution in India." *ibid.* Eventually the Anglo-Japanese alliance was terminated at the Washington Conference 1921-22.
95. Petrie's note on "Pan- Asiatic Movement," op. cit.
96. Peter Low, *Great Britain and Japan 1911-1915* (London, 1969), p. 308.

## **Indo-German Schemes in West Asia, Turkey and Afghanistan**

### **Persia and Turkey**

An anti-British centre was established in Persia during 1909, when Sufi Amba Parshad and Sardar Ajit Singh fled from India. They were subsequently joined by Thakur Das, Rikhikesh and Zia-ul-Haq. For their propaganda they started the paper *Hayat*. Their activities were noticed by the Government of India which suspected that the German Government was trying to help them and was even enlisting the services of all anti-British elements. About the beginning of 1910, the British Government was apprised of the aims of Germany in this area by the Director of Criminal Intelligence who reported that Germany was endeavouring to bring about a union between the Turks and the Persians,\* which after its consolidation, was to be extended to Afghanistan and through that country to the Indian Mohammadans. The same report mentioned that German statesmen were of the view that if Mohammadans rose the Hindus would join hands with them.<sup>1</sup> Relying upon these reports, it was considered necessary by them to make a representation to the Persian Government against the anti-British activities of the Indian revolutionaries. The British Ambassador in Persia was asked to secure the deportation of Amba Parshad and Ajit Singh but he failed due "to the absence of any extradition treaty between India and Persia".<sup>2</sup> Their presentation, however, resulted in restricting the activities of the Indian

revolutionaries and eventually lapsed with the departure of Ajit Singh for Europe in 1911. The movement progressed slowly under Sufi Amba Parshad till the outbreak of the war. The Indian revolutionaries in London, Paris and the United States tried to extend their activities to Turkey, Persia and even Afghanistan, but their efforts hardly achieved any success before the war.<sup>3</sup> On the outbreak of the war, all these countries became active centres for anti-British activities not only of the Indian revolutionaries but also of Germany.

Before the Indian revolutionaries formulated their programme of utilising Persia, Turkey and Afghanistan for insurgency in India, the German Foreign Office tried to incite anti-British feelings among the peoples, but mainly with the idea of inducing Iran and Afghanistan to join the war with Turkey and Germany. They further aimed at stirring up trouble on the North-West Frontier of India for facilitating a general rising in the country.<sup>4</sup>

The Indian revolutionaries also intensified their activities in these areas immediately after the war. The Ghadr Party sent their emissaries to Constantinople to enlist the help of the Turkish Government. The Berlin Committee believed that "no rising would be successful in India unless supported by an attack from Afghanistan".<sup>5</sup> P.N. Datta was already in Constantinople at the beginning of the war and was working with the members of the Central Committee and it was he who wrote to Madame Cama to send some more Indians there.

Madame Cama persuaded Har Dayal, who was in Europe, to pay a visit to Constantinople in September 1914. After having talks with Abu Saiyad, the editor of the *Jehan-i-Islam* and other Turkish leaders, Har Dayal realised the importance of Constantinople as a base for operations against the British Government and even wrote to Barkatullah to join him there.<sup>6</sup> Barkatullah could not come, but sent Khankhoji and Bishen Singh to assist Har Dayal in Constantinople.

On the outbreak of the European war the Germans and the Turks set up a Committee at Constantinople under Shaikh Shawish with the object of exploiting the pan-Islamic sentiments of the Muslims. But, after a short while, the German Foreign Office apprehended that "Shawish's programme of a pan-Islamic



propaganda which should obliterate nationalities and leave merely Moslems was not regarded with favour by any of the national parties",<sup>7</sup> and it required better direction. Har Dayal and the other Indians had carefully watched the activities of the Committee and had shown their disapproval. Har Dayal left Constantinople in disgust without even informing his colleagues. According to the German Ambassador's report,

**the main motive for Har Dayal's departure seemed to be his fear that with the Turkish Mohammadan character of the propaganda undertaken from here with German assistance the Hindu element might be a loser and he himself would not be able to play the role hoped for.**<sup>8</sup>

Har Dayal's biographer also holds that the treatment meted out to him by the German officials and the predominantly Muslim character of the operation forced him to leave Turkey.<sup>9</sup> The German Foreign Office had already noticed the defects of purely pan-Islamic propaganda and after the formation of the Indian National Party in Berlin, new schemes for working with Indians in West Asia were made. These new schemes aimed at the establishment of anti-British centres in Turkey, Persia and Afghanistan. It was intended to send missions to Baghdad, Egypt, Persia and Afghanistan. Har Dayal was especially entrusted with the mission to Turkey.<sup>10</sup> Before Har Dayal could go, another mission of the Indian revolutionaries left Berlin in the meantime.

On its arrival in Constantinople the mission waited upon Enver Pasha, who received it very cordially and appointed Ali Bey of *Tashkilat-i-Makshusa* (Eastern Wing of the Turkish War Office) to provide all facilities to it. After keeping one or two members at Istanbul the mission divided itself into two, one proceeding towards Syria and the other towards Baghdad.<sup>11</sup> P.N. Datta alias Dawood Ali Khan and Pandurang Sidashiv Khankhoji (1884- 967) were sent to Bushire. Later on they were joined by other members of the Ghadr Party, viz., Kedar Nath, Basanta Singh, Chait Singh, Rikhi Kesh, Kersasp, and Amir Chand Sharma. They joined the Wassmuss mission and distributed large number of leaflets among the Indian soldiers in

Mesopotamia and Persia. Some of the Indian revolutionaries were asked to proceed towards the Suez Canal. The idea was to organise the Egyptian nationalists under some Turkish officers and to introduce the Indian revolutionaries to the Sheikhs who could be of some help to them to carry their messages to Egypt.<sup>12</sup> Not much was achieved by this mission, and their object to block the canal in collaboration with the Egyptian revolutionaries was never accomplished on account of the vigilance of the British authorities. Moreover, their activities in this area were always looked upon with suspicion by the Turkish authorities, who considered some of them as German spies and were actually forced to leave Baghdad.<sup>13</sup> In Persia, the Indian revolutionaries carried on their propaganda with Wassmuss and Niedermayer and ultimately the project was given up as there was no possibility of Persians ever joining the war. The Indian revolutionaries after working in Persia for some time also realised that the Persian "people were very much in love with money and the only way one could make them do something for their cause was to give money in their hands".<sup>14</sup> Lack of funds hampered their progress in Persia, but a strong anti-British centre was established at Constantinople.

Har Dayal was deputed by the end of March 1915 by the Committee to proceed to Turkey to help in organising the Suez Mission and in other matters.<sup>15</sup> Immediately after his arrival in Constantinople he informed the Ghadr Party about the thousands of Indian Muslims who were coming every year to perform the Haj. In his view it was essential that *Ghadr* (mutiny, revolt) should be preached to them, and requested the Ghadr Party to send some workers to assist him in this task.<sup>16</sup> In a note to the Berlin Committee Har Dayal mentioned "the great importance of Constantinople as a centre for future work" and hinted that Enver Pasha was inclined to value Indian opinion. He further referred to the paper *Jehan-i-Islam* which was run by the Turkish War Office under Enver Pasha.<sup>17</sup> Har Dayal expressed the desire to bring *Jehan-i-Islam* under the control of the Indian National Party. This was not possible as the Turkish nationalists under the guidance of their War Office were endeavouring to encourage revolutionary movements in Egypt, Persia, Afghanistan and India by propaganda through *Jehan-i-*

*Islam*. Shortly after the Turks joined the war the Turkish Government declared a *jihad* or holy war against the Allies.<sup>18</sup> It also issued five *fatwas* in Turkish signed by the Sheikh-ul-Islam. These *fatwas* enjoined upon all Muslims young and old to take part in *jihad* against the Russians, the British and the French in order to preserve the sanctity of Islamic countries and Islam. To convey these views to the Indian Muslims, extensive use was made of *Jehan-i-Islam*.<sup>19</sup> Har Dayal's suggestion to bring it under the control of the Indian National Party was not liked either by the German Foreign Office or by the Turkish War Office. They feared that the opposition of the Indians to pan-Islamic propaganda was too pronounced and might upset their programme. This brought a conflict between the Indian revolutionaries and the Pan-Islam Party in Turkey. The German Ambassador warned the former that if they wanted to carry on their propaganda from Turkey, they "must not start by rubbing the Mohammadans the wrong way".<sup>20</sup> The friction increased further on account of the intolerant attitude of certain groups of Indian Muslims in Constantinople. Perhaps the situation was also affected by the none too cordial relations between Germany and Turkey, which disturbed relations between the two groups of Indian nationalists, since each was linked with one of the two powers.<sup>21</sup>

The Berlin Committee, dependent upon the German Foreign Office, did not favour Har Dayal and agreed to reorganise their work in Constantinople. The Committee had intended that a strong executive committee should be formed in Constantinople to guide and control the propaganda there, but in their view Har Dayal failed to organise the work on a systematic basis and no concrete programme was submitted by him to the Turkish Government without whose help and sympathy no work in Turkey could succeed.<sup>22</sup> Har Dayal was divested of all the authority and new proposals for reorganising their activities in Constantinople were submitted to the German Foreign Office which enjoined upon the Indian revolutionaries to work there by enlisting the active sympathy and cooperation of the highest officials of the Turkish Government. They were to establish an active centre at Baghdad and in Mesopotamia and Persia. The most important item of work was the formation

of the Indian National Volunteer Corps to be raised from among the Indians resident in the various parts of the Turkish Empire and Indian prisoners of war.<sup>23</sup> The chief object of the Indian National Volunteers was to drive the English out of India and to establish a national Government. But the immediate task was to take part in Mesopotamian expedition and to help Turco-German forces by inducing the Indian soldiers to desert the British army and to carry an intensive anti-British propaganda amongst the Indian prisoners of war.<sup>24</sup> The object of this proposal was more political than military. The Berlin Committee sent Dr Abdul Hafiz to Constantinople in November 1915, to take charge of the work there, and Dr Mansur proceeded to organise work in Baghdad. He was further instructed to carry on vigorous anti-British propaganda in Mesopotamia and see to what extent it would be possible to obtain volunteers for the proposed legion. The orders from the German Foreign Office were that the Volunteer Corps was "to be put with the Ottoman troops in Mesopotamia", and when the opportunity for the Corps was to arrive for their advance through Persia to India it was to be put under the command of the Indians.<sup>25</sup>

To win the favour of the Turkish Government, the Indian revolutionaries formed a Separate association which was named "The Young Hindustan Association of Constantinople" in March 1916 with Dr Abdul Hafiz as President and Dr Mansur as Vice-President. The other members were Ata Muhammad, Tarak Nath Das, Acharya, Das Gupta and Maqbul Hussain. They apparently agreed even to work for the pan-Islamic movement under the Ottoman Government. But despite these outward changes in their thinking, the Indian revolutionaries could not conceal their anti-pan-Islamic leanings, and perhaps the Turkish Government could detect this in their day to day dealings with its members and was not inclined to favour the formation of an Indian legion.<sup>26</sup>

From the very beginning there was strong opposition from the Turkish authorities regarding the formation of the legion. They stipulated that the legion to be formed should be incorporated in the Turkish Army; it was not to have a separate identity and might even be used for Turkish purposes depending on

the discretion of the military authorities. These unreasonable conditions were not acceptable to the Indians and after a good deal of negotiations with the German Foreign Office and Turkish War Office, it was ultimately agreed that the legion when formed would be placed under joint German-Turkish commanders who were to lead them through Southern Persia to the Indian frontier.<sup>27</sup> The Indian revolutionaries under these circumstances were not keen to employ the legion in any military enterprise towards India. Their object in organising the legion was not military action, which they knew was impractical but political action calculated to exercise a moral influence on the Indian people and to serve as a stimulus to the revolutionary movement in India. On the intervention of Khalil Pasha, the Turkish authorities at last agreed to give the Indian revolutionaries the necessary freedom of action to form the legion. The German Ambassador in Baghdad, however, regarded the whole plan as "a phantastic utopia."<sup>28</sup>

The opportunity to form a legion came soon after the fall of Kut-el-Amara (29 April 1916) where there were many Indian prisoners of war. Large number of Indian prisoners of war also sent from Berlin to form the nucleus of the legion. These soldiers fought with the Turkish forces on various fronts, but they could never get an opportunity to join the legion.<sup>29</sup> In July Chattopadhyaya, Datta and Biren Das Gupta went to Konia where over 200 officers were interned. The German Foreign Office, no doubt, gave them the permission to select the prisoners but they were asked to divide them into two sections of Muslims and Hindus who were to make propaganda amongst the troops belonging to their respective communities before the legion could be formed.

The progress of the legion was further retarded by the malicious intrigues of an Indian pan-Islamic faction led by Abdul Jabbar who was secretly being encouraged by some members of the German Embassy. In fact, by the end of 1916 it became clear to the Indian revolutionaries that they could not carry on their work in view of the peculiar mentality of the Turkish officials and intrigues of the Indian Muslims. They were constrained to report to Berlin that there was not the slightest chance of even the best man succeeding unless indeed

he was Muslim.<sup>30</sup> The Berlin Committee attributed the failure of these attempts in Turkey to the selfish and unscrupulous conduct of these Muslims. The other more plausible reason which worked against the formation of a legion was the personal rivalries amongst the members of the Committee. In the initial stages Har Dayal could not pull on well with others. Later on Dr Mansur and Acharya were at logger-heads.<sup>31</sup> The whole question was thoroughly discussed by the Berlin Committee and doubts were raised also regarding the attitude of the German General Staff and whether they were really prepared to give financial and military support to their scheme. The Committee finally decided to get a final and categorical reply from the German Foreign Office and sounded the latter that it was no use wasting so much of money on mere propaganda unless there was a serious desire on the part of the German and Turkish Governments to carry out the plan of a volunteer legion.<sup>32</sup> In the face of these difficulties and the lukewarm response from the German Foreign Office, the Berlin Committee decided in the beginning of 1917 to wind up their affairs in Turkey and the Bureau was eventually closed in March 1917. The failure of the movement in Turkey proved to be quite discouraging for the Indian revolutionaries. From Constantinople as a base they had plans of extending their march to Persia, Afghanistan and India. The defeat of the British force in Mesopotamia and Gallipoli had offered an opportunity to collect a small number of prisoners of war, and the anti-British propaganda carried on by the Indian National Volunteers amongst the Indian soldiers had to some extent affected their morale. By the middle of 1916, General Egerton reported to the British Government that.

the anti-British propaganda in all the regions of Islam had created for them a very real danger which might at any time confront them there in the shape of *Jihad* or religious war declared by Afghanistan—a declaration that would speedily spread amongst the hill tribes on the North-West Frontier and might even reach the considerable population of India itself.

He further added that the pan-Islamic propaganda had resulted in the refusal of the Muslim soldiers to fight against the Turks.<sup>33</sup>

The moment the pan-Islamic policy of the members of the German Embassy and the Turkish Government became pronounced the Indian revolutionaries decided to close their propaganda bureau at Constantinople. They wanted to carry on their fight for freedom on secular principles and considered the encouragement given to the "unscrupulous and fanatical Mohammadans" by the German and Turkish officers as a serious insult to their ideals. The keynote of the policy of the Berlin Committee was "an utter religious toleration and even more a mutual respect for the religion of each other".<sup>34</sup> Though the Indian revolutionaries could not achieve any remarkable success, yet the Indian prisoners of war in Turkey were much better looked after under their supervision than anywhere else.

#### **Mahendra Partap's mission to Afghanistan**

While the movement was progressing slowly in Turkey, Persia and other countries, efforts were made by Germany and the Indian revolutionaries to bring Afghanistan into the arena of war. The initial steps were taken by both Germany and Turkey. On the outbreak of the war when the Indian revolutionaries were organising their party in Berlin, the German Foreign Office while concurring with a suggestion of Enver Pasha to send an expedition to induce the Amir of Afghanistan to invade India despatched about twentyfive German officers to lend support to the enterprise.<sup>35</sup> The Turkish Government was equally keen that Afghanistan should join the war on the side of the Central Powers. Even before Turkey sided with Germany, the Turkish Ambassador in Teheran entrusted two Persians, Pasha Khan and Said Halim, with letters to the Amir of Afghanistan announcing German victories and urging the Amir to join the war for Islam. The mission, however, failed as the emissaries were captured by the British at Kariz.<sup>36</sup>

At the end of September, the German Foreign Office again decided to discuss the suggestion of Enver Pasha in a conference to which they even invited the Indian revolutionaries. The conference had been convened to discuss the feasibility of sending an expedition to Afghanistan under the supervision of

two German officers, Niedermayer and Zugmayer. But before any decision could be given the German Foreign Office sent a telegram informing Wassmuss to make preparations at Shiraz for an expedition towards Afghanistan and India.<sup>37</sup> It was expected that German money, arms and organisation and a declaration of *jehad* by Turkey would enable the Central Powers to raise Moslem Asia against the Allies and divert much of Great Britain's attention from Europe. Wassmuss accordingly formed a mission consisting of Germans, Turks and some of the Indian revolutionaries who were already in Persia.<sup>38</sup> The members of this mission were to work in different directions with the object of inducing the Persians, Afghans and Indians to start hostilities against the British.<sup>39</sup> The mission was supplied with a mass of inflammatory literature in Hindi, Urdu, Gurmukhi and English, mostly addressed to the soldiers of the Indian army calling upon them "to take the opportunity to rise, throw off the hated English yoke" and "to kill the English officers."<sup>40</sup>

Wassmuss' mission received a warm welcome at Shiraz. Their propaganda was so effective that it appeared to the British authorities at that time that German efforts combined with the effect of the *jehad* would either force the Persian Government to join the Central Powers or leave Persian Ministers too powerless to prevent the Swedish *gendarmere* from joining the forces organised by Turco-German agency in anti-ally hostilities. Following the success of Wassmuss' mission, the German Foreign Office sent Niedermayer and Zugmayer to Constantinople for the discussion of further plans with Enver Pasha, who was confident that the Amir of Afghanistan would fall in with their plans. While at Aleppo, Wassmuss encountered serious differences with Yusuf Bey, the Turkish Governor of Syria.<sup>41</sup> On account of these differences Wassmuss left for South-West Persia and the main charge of the operation now came under Niedermayer. Niedermayer had many troubles and difficulties to overcome. There was constant friction between German and Turks and there was also dissension among the Germans themselves over the proposal to organise the expedition on a military basis. In Baghdad, Niedermayer had discussions with Colonel Rauf Bey for an expedition towards Afghanistan. But the latter gave a



very disappointing picture about the possibility of Afghanistan joining the war and even told Niedermayer that his attempts to get into touch with the Amir of Afghanistan had been futile and doubted if Turks or Germans could get permission to enter that country.<sup>12</sup> Ignoring the advice of Rauf Bey, Niedermayer proceeded towards Afghanistan without the help of the Turks and crossed the Persian frontier with his party on 3 April 1915. At Kermanshah the party was divided into two sections. The first party which he accompanied to Teheran included Gunther Voight, Kurt Wagner, Wilhelm Peschan and others, while the other party consisting of Fredrich Seiler, Erich Zugmayer and Walter Griesinger and some Indian revolutionaries proceeded towards Southern Persia with instructions to "advance into the British protectorate of Baluchistan"<sup>13</sup> Niedermayer waited in Persia for sometime but soon realised that it was "hopeless to expect Persia to join the war" and left for Afghanistan.<sup>44</sup>

While the various German missions were trying to find their way to Afghanistan, the Indian revolutionaries in Berlin presented their own scheme for work in Afghanistan to the German Foreign Office. The plan was prepared by Mahendra Pratap, who had come to Europe from India towards the end of 1914. According to an India Office report, Mahendra Pratap had gone to Europe on behalf of several Indian princes to ascertain whether military position would make it a favourable moment for revolution in India.<sup>45</sup>

On the outbreak of war, Mahendra Pratap was staying in Switzerland. From there he was invited to Germany by Umrao Singh Majithia. The invitation was delivered personally to him by Har Dayal, Chattopadhyaya and Von Wesendonk.<sup>46</sup>

In Berlin, the German Government showed him every consideration and gave him the opportunity to watch the fighting from the advanced trenches and from an aeroplane. The Kaiser Wilhelm II granted him an audience.<sup>47</sup> The scheme for work in Afghanistan was submitted to the German Foreign Office by Mahendra Pratap. In this scheme Mahendra Pratap referred to the situation in India as quite favourable for a revolution and in his opinion if the Afghan army was persuaded to invade India, the British Empire in India would be overthrown. He further mentioned that in case of an Afghan invasion of

India, it was "necessary to secure the hearty cooperation of the Hindus" who might oppose if they viewed it as a raid of a foreign Muslim adventurer. In order to remove this apprehension of the Hindus, Mahendra Pratap wanted to proceed to Kabul, and "join the Afghan Army" and "assure the Hindus that the National Party was working in collaboration with the court of Kabul for the emancipation of India". In this scheme for creating a revolution in India Mahendra Pratap laid stress on the importance for Germany to negotiate with the Indian Princes and nationalist leaders, and suggested that the German Foreign Office should write to them emphasising the existing "community of interest between Germany and India".<sup>48</sup>

The above proposal was immediately accepted by the German Foreign Office. Mahendra Pratap quickly despatched his emissary Harish Chandra to India order to communicate the programme of the Berlin Committee to the Indian leaders and Indian princes. Harish Chandra was also instructed to send persons from India to Kabul to join the Indian revolutionaries and to take steps for creating public opinion in India for welcoming a military action by Afghanistan on the North-West Frontier.<sup>49</sup>

After the project was approved by Baron Wesendonk of the foreign ministry and Captain Rudolf Nadolny from the German General Staff, the command of the mission was given to Lieutenant Werner Otto Von Hentig who had been on the staff of the Teacher Legation when war broke out and had been recalled in March 1915 to take a diplomatic mission to conclude an alliance with Afghanistan.<sup>50</sup> The Hentig mission consisting of Mahendra Pratap, Barkatullah, Dr Karl Becker, and Lieutenant Walter Rohr and a number of Afghan-Afridi soldiers left Berlin on 10 April 1915. The mission carried with it large quantities of gold, arms and ammunition. Mahendra Pratap held in his possession 27 letters<sup>51</sup> from the German Reich-Chancellor addressed to various Rajas, Maharajas and Nawabs in India. Letters addressed to the Rajas and Maharajas were translated into Hindi and to the Nawabs into Urdu. Mahendra Pratap also had two more letters, one for the Amir of Afghanistan signed by the Kaiser himself and the other for the Maharaja of Nepal signed by the Reich-Chancellor. The German Chancellor

Bethmann-Hollweg gave an introductory letter to Mahendra Pratap asking the Amir to help the Indian revolutionaries in their struggle for freedom from the British rule.<sup>52</sup>

The mission spent some time at Constantinople where Mahendra Pratap had interviews with some leading men in Turkey especially the Khedive of Egypt, the Prime Minister of Turkey, Enver Pasha and the Sultan of Turkey. The Sultan gave him an autographed letter for the Amir of Afghanistan and seven letters addressed to different Indian princes urging them to rise against the British Government.<sup>53</sup> The Turkish Government proved very helpful and even instructed one of their representatives Captain Kazim Bey to accompany the mission. From Constantinople the mission went to Persia, where it was joined by Niedermayer and his party. The main task of the various German missions which were sent towards Afghanistan and Baluchistan was to start trouble on the borders of India in order to prevent the British from despatching the troops to Gallipoli, France and Mesopotamia. Niedermayer had been specially directed to enter Afghanistan and to entangle that country "at all costs in a war with Russia and England."<sup>54</sup>

The Government of India was aware of the advance of the various German parties towards Afghanistan and in order to prevent their entry had given orders to their Consul at Kerman for the disbursement of secret service funds with a free hand in order to arrest the march of these parties. The Consul-General at Meshed was even ordered to arrange, if possible, with the help of the Russian troops to "capture or annihilate any party of Germans" which might be "discovered attempting to enter Afghanistan".<sup>55</sup>

Lord Hardinge, the Viceroy also warned the Amir of Afghanistan about the possible advent of the German parties. The Amir was instructed "pending conclusion of war to have them arrested, disarmed or interned",<sup>56</sup> in case of their entry into Afghanistan. But in spite of the strict vigilance of the British officers and despite great hardship and dangers, the Hentig party crossed into Afghanistan at *Chah-i-Rig* frontier. The party reached Herat on 24 August 1915, where it was received in a durbar by the Governor who was shown the proclamation of *jehad* issued with the authority of the Sultan of Turkey.

From Herat, the party proceeded via Kandahar to Kabul. At that time the party consisted of six Germans, two or three Turks, and a Mullah, two Indians, Afridi deserters, Jamadar Mir Mast, 60 Arab soldiers, one Persian and 50 transport mules. The party reached Kabul on 2 October 1915<sup>67</sup> and was accommodated in *Bagh-i-Babar*. The Amir was staying at Paghman at that time.

Despite the entry of Hentig and his party, the Government of India was satisfied with the reply from the Amir assuring them that the Afghan Government would not allow armed parties of foreigners to tour Afghanistan. Diplomatically the Amir reiterated his intention to maintain neutrality during the war.<sup>68</sup> The appearance of the Indian revolutionaries along with the Germans in Kabul gave rise to a good deal of gossip which made it appear that the Kabul Government was on the eve of launching an attack on the British in India. But these empty rumours were contradicted by the report from the British Agent in Kabul who affirmed that the Amir and his Government were taking no anti-British steps, military or otherwise, but he mentioned that the vast majority of illiterate and fanatical Afghans were strongly pro-Turkish and consequently anti-British.<sup>69</sup> Since the arrival of the Indian revolutionaries and the German parties, the Afghan Government had treated them as honoured guests and on 10 October the Amir sent a message bidding them welcome and promising to meet them shortly. In the interim period Inayatullah and Nasrullah, the son and the brother of the Amir paid them long visits.<sup>60</sup> But the real attitude of the Afghan Government became clear when the party met the Amir on 24 October at Paghman. In this meeting, Mahendra Pratap and Barkatullah took a prominent part. Both of them tried to convince the Amir of the necessity of his help for their cause; they even told the Amir that the Germans were likely to be successful in the conflict and tempted him by pointing to the various benefits which Afghanistan would secure if it sided with the Turco-German cause.<sup>61</sup> The Amir was given the letters from the Kaiser and the Sultan of Turkey. It appears from the report of the British Agent that the Amir was not impressed by the German party and even the pleadings of the Indian revolutionaries had no effect on him. The German

members particularly realised that the Amir exercised control over even the smallest matters in his realm, that they could not hope to induce him to come to any decision rashly and that he was evidently very much under British influence. Though the general impression gained from their audience with the Amir regarding their chances of success was not encouraging, there seemed to be several factors in the situation which made it worth their while to persevere. Nasrullah who was anti-British showed his sympathy with the Germans in every way, while there were Afghan nobles who were also pro-German in their thinking. In a subsequent meeting the Amir frankly told them that it was not possible for him to "break his alliance with the Government of Great Britain". While these negotiations were going on between the members of the Hentig mission and the Amir, the Government of India announced an increase of two lakhs of rupees in the subsidy to the Amir. This was done as a token of appreciation of the Amir's attitude and in order to enable him to convince those of his advisers and people who were questioning the wisdom of his neutrality.<sup>62</sup> This offer of material advantage to the Amir for remaining neutral had a detrimental effect on the German plans. At times it became increasingly difficult for the Amir to maintain this attitude in the face of strong opposition from the war party and the rise of pan-Islamic feelings amongst the people. The Amir tried to keep the war party under control and continued to encourage the pro-British forces. But the arrival of the Muslims with pro-Turkish leanings from India brought another element of disturbance for the Amir.<sup>63</sup>

After the declaration of war by Turkey, the Government of India had received a number of disquieting reports about the propaganda of the pan-Islamists in and out of India and had discovered that there was a good deal of contact and sympathy between the Wahabis, the Maulvis and the Indian Muslims.<sup>61</sup> The flight of the fifteen Muslim students from Lahore in 1915 convinced the authorities in India that there were Muslims in the country who believed that the way of salvation for the Indian Muslims "lies in waging war against the infidel Government of India." These fifteen students went to Kabul with the intention of joining the Turks in "any capacity for which they

were fitted either as spies, messengers, preachers of *Jihad* or soldiers.”<sup>65</sup> The Amir tried to impress upon the students that the time was not ripe for *jihad* and that he would give them support at the proper time. They were followed by Obedullah, a great pan-Islamist leader who left India with three companions Abdullah, Fateh Khan and Mohammad Ali. The object of Obedullah in going to Kabul was to take part in the *jihad* and to “rouse the whole of Afghanistan to wage war against the British Government.”<sup>66</sup> Obedullah was of the view that if Afghanistan and Persia would unite against the British they could expel them from India. He had built up his hopes on the pan-Islamic tendencies visible amongst the Indian Muslims after the declaration of the war by Turkey. The Director of Criminal Intelligence, however, did not attach any importance to Obedullah and his views.<sup>67</sup>

Immediately after his arrival in Kabul Obedullah was invited by the Indian revolutionaries to join them. Though it was not possible for them to induce the Amir to declare war against Britain, yet with the help of Nasrullah and other members of the war party, the Indian revolutionaries alongwith Obedullah were able to form two associations, *Al Janud-a-Rabbania* (The Army of God) and *Hukumat-i-Moogita-i-Hind* (The Provisional Government of India). The Provisional Government of India started functioning from 1 December 1915 with its headquarters in the tribal territory. Mahendra Pratap became its life President; Barkatullah was appointed Prime Minister and Obedullah was entrusted with the home portfolio in this government.<sup>68</sup> A declaration was issued by the Provisional Government and its copies were sent to India. The declaration referred to the promises of help given by the Turkish and the German governments for the liberation of India.<sup>69</sup> The subsequent proclamation mentioned the alliance between the Hindus and the Muslims and the formation of the Provisional Government with the approval of the Sultan of Turkey and the Kaiser of Germany. The Provisional Government made an appeal to the “warriors and heroic sons of India” to rise and help the Indian revolutionaries to annihilate the British and liberate India.<sup>70</sup>

Like the Turco-German mission, the Provisional Government

was also working desperately to bring about a collision between Afghanistan and Great Britain and to prepare India for the acceptance of the Afghan invasion.<sup>71</sup> Meanwhile the members of the German mission succeeded in concluding a treaty of friendship with the Amir which was signed on 24 January 1916. By this treaty, the German Government pledged to furnish the Afghan Government without subject to return, one million rifles, 300 guns with ammunition and other war material and ten million pounds sterling and recognised the independence of Afghanistan. The German Government further agreed to defend Afghanistan with all possible measures against foreign aggression and in case Afghanistan was agreeable to join the war, Germany promised to help her to recover "lost and conquered territories."<sup>72</sup>

The Government of India, though perturbed over the trend of events in Afghanistan, attached very little importance to the signing of this treaty which in their opinion the Amir had signed in order to "placate his counsellors, to quieten his people and to avoid a definite breach with Germany and Turkey in the event of their winning" the war. The members of the German mission, no doubt, signed the treaty, but they had no credentials and for approval it was sent through a messenger Hassan, to be delivered to Griesinger a German officer at Del Halal for onward transmission to Berlin. It appears from the diary of Griesinger that Hadji Hassan was arrested by the British and the draft treaty never reached its destination in time.<sup>73</sup> In the absence of any approval from Berlin, the members of the German mission realised that there was not the slightest hope of Afghanistan joining the war. The Amir had made it quite clear to them that it was unwise for him to go to war unless a Turco-German force arrived in the proximity of Afghanistan.<sup>74</sup> This was indicated by Niedermayer in the cypher telegram to Berlin in which he referred to the statement of the Amir who was willing to declare war "as soon as 20,000 to 100,000 German and Turkish soldiers" arrived in Afghanistan. Roos-Keppel, the Chief Commissioner of the North-West Frontier Province also reported to Chelmsford that the Amir was determined to keep out of the war and that nothing short of the arrival of Turkish or German troops in Afghanistan would induce him to change

his attitude.<sup>75</sup> According to another report the Amir told the German mission that he could not join the war until the Germans or Turks were able to oust the Russians from Persia.<sup>76</sup> The Germans or the Turks were in no position to fulfil either of these two conditions. While the Amir, the very next day after signing the treaty with the Germans, showed a more realistic understanding of his position and reiterated his determination to remain neutral.<sup>77</sup> The attitude of the Amir was conditioned to a great extent by the secret information which he received from the Viceroy that in case he refused to declare war, the German parties were contemplating his extermination and staging a *coup d'état*.<sup>78</sup> Under these circumstances, the members of the German mission had no choice but to leave Afghanistan on May 21, 1916. Save for the draft-treaty, the German mission could not achieve much in Afghanistan. But their anti-British propaganda amongst the frontier tribes fructified later. The failure of the mission was mainly due to the fact that the Amir could realise that it was in the best interests of his country to remain neutral and that having promised this to the British, he would not allow himself to be persuaded or intimidated into breaking his word.<sup>79</sup> As compared with the Germans, the Indian revolutionaries had consolidated their position and in the beginning the Amir nearly joined hands with the pan-Islamic party by giving approval to the publication of anti-British literature which might have involved Afghanistan in the war, but the cautious approach of the Amir's advisers saved the situation.<sup>80</sup>

The Indian revolutionaries also received encouragement from Mahmud Tarzi and other members of the war party, but the sudden departure of the members of the German mission retarded the progress of their activities. The mission had left taking away all the money which was brought from Berlin. Barkatullah considered the presence of Hentig with the mission a great misfortune and serious lapse on the part of the German Government to "allow entire control of money to one individual like Von Hentig". After having achieved the objective—forming an alliance with Afghanistan—Hentig might have considered it absolutely futile to stay on in Kabul for the sake of helping the Indian revolutionaries. By profession a diplomat,



Hentig was not at all inclined to favour those projects which were not conducive to the interests of his country. In spite of the friendship and sympathy of the war party, the Indian revolutionaries were unable to do any effective work due to lack of money. Immediately after the departure of the German mission, the German Foreign Office was requested to send a considerable sum of money in the hands of a sympathetic German statesman and at least ten thousand troops "to Afghanistan for Indian work."<sup>81</sup> The German Foreign Office, perhaps, took no notice of these requests from the Indian revolutionaries, who were now left to carry on their activities with the help of a few sympathisers in Afghanistan. Saifullah, the British Agent in Kabul, reported that after the German mission left, the Indian revolutionaries decided to enter into an agreement with the Amir. After discussion for several days, the members of the Provisional Government decided that if Afghanistan was willing to declare war against Britain, then they were prepared to acknowledge him as the permanent ruler of India. A request to this effect was laid before the Amir, but as the latter was not prepared yet to join the war, the question was dropped.<sup>82</sup> Perhaps a treaty was also signed between the Provisional Government and the Amir.<sup>83</sup> Though the Amir did not agree to the proposal of the Provisional Government to declare war against Britain, he allowed the Provisional Government to enter into diplomatic relations with other foreign powers. In March 1916, the Provisional Government sent two of its emissaries, Mathura Singh (1883-1917) and Muhammad Ali, with letters to the Governor of Russian Turkestan signed by Mahendra Pratap referring to the help received by the Provisional Government from Germany and Turkey for the cause of India and expressed the hope that "Russia would extend the same help". Mahendra Pratap further mentioned the unique opportunity which this war had offered to Russia for joining hands with Afghanistan and "by so doing establish her influence in Asia on a permanent basis."<sup>84</sup>

In the letter to the Tzar, Mahendra Pratap expressed regret that India's two powerful neighbours "should be fighting each other and hoped that they would soon unite to crush England, the tyrant of the world and set free the people whom she had

enslaved".<sup>85</sup> The diplomatic representatives of the Provisional Government were received with great honour and respect by the Russian authorities. The Governor-General of Tashkent made all possible arrangements for their convenience and comfort.<sup>86</sup> The British Government was greatly perturbed on receiving a report of the reception given to the emissaries of the Provisional Government. A protest letter was immediately sent to the Russian Government who were asked to arrest the Indians and if possible to send them to India. The Russian Government did not comply with this demand, but Indian emissaries were asked to leave the country.<sup>87</sup> The Provisional Government also sent their representatives to various other countries as part of their programme to get recognition, and to establish diplomatic relations. The Provisional Government also drew up an elaborate programme along with the pan-Islmic party for combining all the forces of Islam—the Turks and the Arabs under the Sherif of Mecca—and to join the Afghans, the frontier tribes and the Muslim masses as well as Hindus in India in a combined effort to oust the British from India.<sup>88</sup>

The preliminaries of this programme had already been drawn by Obedullah while he was in India. Obedullah had left India with a view to forming an alliance with the Turkish Government and, making Kabul as his base, he tried to achieve this objective. He made efforts to contact his old associate Mahmud Hassan who was at Mecca.<sup>89</sup> Obedullah sent two letters to Mahmud Hassan and Muhammed Mian Ansari. The special messenger Abdul Haq entrusted with these letters was directed to deliver them to Sheikh Abdur Rahim of Hyderabad-Sind, who was to despatch them further, through a reliable Haji (pilgrim) to Mahmud Hassan in Mecca.<sup>90</sup> The letters written on Yellow silk in Persian contained a graphic account of the activities of the Indian revolutionaries in Kabul. The first letter mentioned the formation of the "Provisional Government" and "The Army of God" or "The Army of Liberation". It was also stated that the object of "The Army of God" was to bring about an alliance among Islamic rulers. Mahmud Hassan was asked "to convey these particulars as quick as possible to the Ottoman Government and the Sultan"

as this was "the only way of dealing an effective blow at the infidels in India."<sup>91</sup>

The second letter contained a complete tabular statement of "The Army of God" and Mahmud Hassan was listed as the head of the army with the title of *El-Quaid* (General). The scheme in brief was that Mahmud Hassan was to get in touch with the Turkish Government through the Turkish Governor in Hedjaz for an alliance with the Islamic countries. On the other hand the members of the Provisional Government were to intrigue to the same end with the anti-British party in Afghanistan and to keep the frontier tribes in a state of constant hostility to the British. Meanwhile the Indian revolutionaries in India were to collect money to finance the activities in Kabul, India and the Hedjaz.<sup>92</sup>

The scheme was an ambitious one and by no means impossible of execution in the circumstances then existing. The revolutionaries in Afghanistan especially the pan-Islamic party were sure of its success, but unfortunately Abdul Haq who carried these letters instead of taking them to their destination revealed their contents to Khan Bahadur Rab Nawaz Khan, a police officer in Multan. Thereupon the authorities in India were apprised of the whole conspiracy.<sup>93</sup> The discovery resulted in the arrest of many persons in the Punjab, Sind, Delhi and Peshawar. In all 59 persons were convicted in what came to be known as the Silk-Letters Conspiracy Case. The police investigations revealed that the whole project was not one of a closely organised conspiracy, but one of shifting schemes which had little foundation in India and depended for its success on the willingness and ability of the Afghan and other Muslims outside India to head an armed revolution in India.<sup>94</sup> The conspiracy had no chance of success in the presence of a strict attitude of friendly neutrality adopted by the Amir. Another factor which proved a stumbling block to the fulfilment of the project was the revolt of the Sherif of Mecca against the Ottoman Government, which weakened the line of communication between India and Turkey by means of pilgrims to Mecca and Medina which Obedullah attempted to use in furtherance of his schemes.<sup>95</sup> "The revolt", writes O'Dwyer, "divided Islam and knocked the bottom out of the project for combined

**Muslim action against British India.”<sup>96</sup>**

Mahmud Hassan alongwith four of his companions was arrested in Mecca in December 1916 and was interned in Malta. The temporary alliance of the Indian revolutionaries with the pan-Islamic propagandists was artificial and was not based on any genuine patriotic feelings. The common motive of the expulsion of the British from India was the only binding factor between the two, otherwise there was a sharp division in their political outlook. The Indian revolutionaries abroad had always believed in secular principles and had carried on their struggle on this basis, while the fight of the pan-Islamic party was antagonistic to the idea of secularism. Obedullah with his sectarian outlook viewed the Provisional Government as detrimental to the welfare of Islam and the sole motive which prompted him to join it was to safeguard the interest of the Muslims. He even suspected that the object of the Hindus was to establish a government in India without the share of any other community, and once their power was established they would “eventually drive Islam out of India.”<sup>97</sup> Naturally with these ideological differences amongst the various groups in Kabul, the success of the schemes was foredoomed to failure.

Despite the failure of the scheme, the Provisional Government remained firmly rooted in Kabul, where it continued to carry on its activities. Undeterred Mahendra Pratap made another desperate attempt for the overthrow of the British Government in India. He tried to win the favour of the Indian rulers by means of the letters of the German Chancellor. The letters were duly posted to different rulers. Mahendra Pratap had brought with him forty-seven letters from the German Chancellor and seven letters from the Sultan of Turkey to the Indian Rajas, Maharajas and Nawabs. The letters from the German Chancellor stated that if the rulers and subjects of India would constitute a Indian National Government, it would be duly recognised as free Government by Germany and Turkey and other powers. While despatching Pratap appended a note with each letter appealing to the Indian rulers to assist in the establishment of one mighty independent confederation or commonwealth and requested them in “the name of God, in the name of Hind and humanity” to declare themselves as friends

of Germany and Turkey who were the really winning party in the war.<sup>98</sup>

The Government of India knew about the despatch of these letters and the Director of Criminal Intelligence had obtained copies of these from his Agent in Berlin. With this information they took the rulers of the Indian states into their confidence. A conference was convened in which all the rulers expressed their eagerness to help and seize the emissary who might bring these letters. Not only that, they offered their wholehearted support for crushing the forces hostile to the stability of the British Government. Kala Singh, the emissary of the Provisional Government, was arrested while returning from Nepal. The letters reached their destination, but the loyal Indian rulers handed them over to the Government of India.

Like the other schemes formed with the help of Germany, the mission to Afghanistan also did not succeed in its object to create any serious trouble for the British on the Indian frontiers. Pratap was disappointed and while reporting his sentiments to the German Foreign Office, he ascribed the failure of the mission to the lack of finances as not a single penny was placed at his disposal "in Germany and Turkey to carry on" his holy duties.<sup>99</sup>

The success of the Russian revolution gave a new dimension to the Indian revolutionary movement abroad. Despite the failure of the scheme formed with the help of Germany, the Indian revolutionaries did not accept defeat. After 1917, they turned their attention towards Soviet Russia, which had emerged as the champion of the oppressed people all over the world. The Provisional Government remained intact in Kabul while Pratap left for Berlin in 1918 *via* Russia. It was no secret that Amir Habibullah was pro-British, but Nasrullah, the Prime Minister, was out and out anti-British and helped the Provisional Government financially. Besides, there were many Afghans who were in sympathy with the Indian revolutionaries in their movement against the British.<sup>100</sup>

### References

1. D.C.I. report, 18 August 1910. Foreign Department External A, Conf. B 1911, Nos. 2-47. N.A.I.
2. British Political Resident in Persia to Government of India, 20 May 1910. Foreign Department, External B, Confidential B, 1910, Nos. 36-41. N.A.I.
3. In 1911, the Paris Indian Society sent Tirumal Acharya to Constantinople for enlisting the help of the Turkish nationalists in their fight against the British, but without success. In 1912 Barkatullah also visited Turkey with the same object. See report British Intelligence, Home Department, February 1912, Nos. 65-68. N.A.I.
4. Weekly report D.C.I. Home Political B, August 1915, Nos. 522-56 N.A.I.
5. Secretary of State to Viceroy, 11 December 1917. Home Political B, February 1919, No. 185, N.A.I.
6. Even Enver Pasha showed sympathy with the activities of the Indian revolutionaries and in a speech which was published in *Jehan-i-Islam* on 20 November 1914, he said that "this is the time that the Ghadr should be declared in India, the magazines of the English should be plundered, their weapons looted and they should be killed forthwith." *Sedition Committee Report*, p. 120.
7. War Office, Memorandum on German literary propaganda as regards India and the Orient, Home Political Deposit, December 1916, No. 30. N.A.I.
8. V. Wangenheim to Bethmann-Hollweg, 27 November 1914, quoted in H. Kruger, "Har Dayal in Germany".
9. Dharmavira, *Har Dayal and Movements of His Times* (Delhi, 1970), p. 220.
10. Har Dayal to Barkatullah, 30 March 1915. F.O. No. 371/2785/1916. P.R.O.
11. "Report on the Suez Canal Mission." 12 October 1915, German Foreign Office Records, Roll No. 398. N.A.I.
12. *ibid.*
13. *The Ghadr Directory*, op. cit., p. 10.
14. *ibid.* See next section.
15. Har Dayal to Barkatullah 60 March 1915. F.O. No. 371/2785/1916. P.R.O.
16. D.C.I. Note on "Turco-German Schemes for Causing Trouble in India." Home Political B, September 1915, Nos. 582-83. N.A.I. Har Dayal also sent an article "Jang Ka Kacha Chittha" which was

published in the *Ghadr* 18 July 1915 which enumerated the victories of Germany and Turkey over the allies at the different theatres of war and called upon Indians to raise the standard of revolt in India against the British.

17. Har Dayal to Berlin Committee, 16 April 1915. German Foreign Office Records, Roll No. 398 N.A.I.
18. Ker, op. cit. p. 297.
19. *ibid.*, p. 298.
20. H. Kruger, op. cit.
21. *ibid.* The Pan-Islamic group which propagated against the Indian nationalists was headed by Abdul Jabbar and Abdul Sattar. Berlin Committee to German Foreign Office, 2 February 1917. German Foreign Office Records, Roll No. 398. N A.I.
22. Berlin Committee to German Foreign Office, 2 November 1915. German Foreign Office Records, Roll No. 398. From this time onward Har Dayal came in sharp conflict with the Berlin Committee. Efforts were made for reconciliation between him and other members, but to no avail and in 1918 he went to Stockholm to work with Chattopadhyaya and in 1919 severed his connection with the Berlin group and wrote a critical book in which he passed strictures on the Indian revolutionaries calling them "misguided patriots and unprincipled adventurers" and praising British imperialism. Har Dayal, *Forty-four months in Germany and Turkey, February 1915 to October 1918 : A Record of Personal Impressions* (London 1920). Under the force of uncongenial circumstances, Har Dayal might have changed his views, but throughout his life he was at heart as much of a revolutionary as ever and believed in the ultimate independence for India. Besides Har Dayal, Pillai also could not pull on cordially with the Berlin Committee. In one of the letters which he wrote direct to Baron Wesendonk from Constantinople he requested that he might be allowed to go back to Switzerland. These differences amongst the members of the Berlin Committee did not prove very beneficial to the Indian revolutionary movement in West Asia. The exit of Har Dayal and decline in Pillai's authority proved, detrimental to the movement abroad. Champakraman Pillai to Wesendonk, 20 June 1916. German Foreign Office Records, Roll No. 400. N.A.I.
23. Berlin Committee to German Foreign Office, 2 November 1915. G.F.O. N.A.I. *ibid.*
24. *ibid.*
25. Berlin Committee, "The Proposed Indian National Volunteer Legion," 4 July 1916. German Foreign Office Records, Roll No. 399. N.A.I.

- 26 Foreign Department, Ext. B, 1920, Nos. 441-449. N.A.I.
27. German Foreign Office Record, Roll No. 399. N.A.I.
28. *ibid.*
29. "See Statement of Jamadar Fazal Din." Home Political F. No. 9/V/1932. K.W. II. N.A.I.
30. Berlin Committee to German Foreign Office, 20 November 1916. German Foreign Office Records, Roll No. 399. B.N. Datta also mentions that the project of forming the legion "was given up on account of the queer behaviour of the Turkish officials and the German Government finally said that it was beyond the range of practical politics." J.C. Chatterjee. *Indian Revolutionaries in Conference* (Calcutta, 1965), p. 64.
31. Acharya to Chattopadhyaya, 19 May 1916. German Foreign Office Records, Roll No. 398. N A I.
32. Note by the Indian Independence Committee, 4 July 1916. German Foreign Office Records, Roll No. 398. N.A.I.
33. Minute by General Sir Charles Egerton, 25 May 1916. Chelmsford Papers, I.O.L.
34. Umrao Singh to Glasenapp, 23 January 1917. German Foreign Office Records, Roll N. 399, N.A.I.
35. Brigadier General F.J. Moberly. *Operattons in Persta 1914-1915 : History of the Great War, based on Official Documents* (Calcutta, 1916), p. 48.
36. Foreign and Secret Department, F. No. 3443/1914, Part I. Adamec, however, holds that an emissary did reach Herat and remained there as guest of the governor while his message was conveyed to the Amir. Four weeks later, a secret letter from the Amir arrived and was shown to the emissary who was to memorize its contents and report it to Teheran. In the letter the Amir assured to do his Islamic duty. Ludwig W. Adamec, *Afghanistan's Foreign Affairs to Mid Twentieth Century Relattons with the USSR, Germany and Britain* (Arizona, 1974), p. 21.
37. Moberly, op. cit., p. 55.
38. Besides Sufi Amba Parshad, the Indian revolutionaries who actively participated in the campaign with Wassmus were Khankhoji alias Muhammed Khan and Kedar Nath. *The Ghadr Directory*, op. cit., p. 219.
39. A.P. Trevor, Deputy Political Resident, Persian Gulf, to Government of India, 13 December 1915. Foreign Department, Secret War, May 1915, Nos. 1-288. N.A.I.



40. "War Office Memorandum of German Literary propaganda as regards India and the Orient." Home Poll. Deposit, Dec. 1916, No. 30. N.A.I.
41. A.C. Bose, "Efforts at seeking Foreign Intervention through the Middle East during the World War I", *Indian History Congress* (Poona), 1963, p. 216. Some years before the war, Wassmuss was Consul at Bushire and by entertaining lavishly and giving presents to the Tangistanis and other neighbouring tribesmen, had created a strong pro-German party. For details about the activities of Wassmuss in Persia, see Percy Sykes, *A History of Persia*, Vol. II (London, 1969) and C.H. Sykes, *Wassmuss, 'The German Lawrence'* (London, 1936).
42. Moberly, op. cit., p. 77. Niedermayer who had returned from a trip to India in the spring of 1914 had little faith in the stories of revolutionary unrest in India, in the power or capacity of Indians to overthrow British rule or even in the probability of internal risings on the appearance of an enemy on the Indian frontier. Nevertheless thinking that much could be done in Persia and Afghanistan to divert British attention, he took part in the enterprise. *ibid.*, p. 74.
43. Extract from Meshed Diary, 23 September 1916. Foreign Department, Frontier Confidential A, 1918, Nos. 2-186. N.A.I.
44. Moberly, op. cit., p. 82.
45. See Political and Secret Department Vol. No. 4353/1920. I.O.L. This could not be checked from any other source. Even Mahendra Pratap when interviewed by the author in Delhi in 1973 was hesitant to confirm it.
46. Weekly report D.C.I. 24 February 1919. Home Political B, February 1919, Nos. 181-84. Sardar Umrao Singh was the elder brother of Sardar Sundar Singh Majithia, a nationalist leader of the Panjab. He was then living in Budapest. On his way to Afghanistan, Umrao Singh met Mahendra Pratap at Budapest. Though not an active member of the Berlin Committee Umrao Singh was associated with the Kabul mission and it was he who later wrote to Mahendra Pratap in Kabul that they should fight on secular lines. He came back to India on the intervention of his brother. His daughter Amrita Sher Gill distinguished herself as a great artist. See German Foreign Office Records, Roll No. 400. N.A.I.
47. Mahendra Pratap's letter to the editor, *Straj-ul-Akhbar* (Kabul), 4 May 1916, Punjab Police Abstracts of Intelligence, 1916, B.S.A.
48. Memorandum by Mahendra Pratap, 17 February 1915. German Foreign Office Records, Roll No. 397. N.A.I.
49. *ibid.* Harish Chandra on his way to India gave all the information to the British and in fact became their agent. See Chapter VIII.

50. Moberly, *op. cit.* p 84.
51. Mahendra Pratap, *Reflections of an Exile* (Lahore, 1946), p. 13. See Appendix V.
52. Mahendra Pratap's letter, *op. cit.*
53. *ibid.*
54. Statement of Captain Paschan, 3 October 1916. Foreign Department, Secret War, October 1917, Nos. 1-319 N.A.I.
55. Telegram, Viceroy to Secretary of State for India, 3 July 1915. Foreign Department, Secret War, January 1916, Nos. 1-202. N A.I.
56. A H. Grant , "Memorandum on Afghanistan", 30 December 1915. Political and Secret Memoranda No. 173 A. The political relations between the British Government in India and the Amir of Afghanistan were governed by the treaties which forbade the latter from having external relations with any power other than the British. See D.P. Singhal, *India and Afghanistan 1876-1907* (St. Lucia, Queensland, 1963),
57. A.H. Grant : "Memorandum of Afghanistan," 33 December 1915. "Political and Secret Memoranda, No. 173A." The information regarding the arrival of the German party in Kabul on 2 October 1915 was conveyed to the Indian Government by the Chief Commissioner, North West Frontier Province, who had received it from a Peshawar *mtstry* employed in the Amir's powder factory. Foreign Office No. 371/2431/1915. P.R.O.
58. *ibid.* The Amir sent a secret message to Hardinge to the effect that he would do his utmost to maintain strict neutrality so long as the independence of Afghanistan was not threatened. See Lord Hardinge of Penhurst. *My Indian Years 1910-1916* (London, 1948), p. 132.
59. Punjab Police Abstracts of Intelligence, 1916. B.S.A.
60. A.H. Grant , "Memorandum on Afghanistan," 30 December 1915. Political and Secret Memoranda No. 173A I.O.L.
61. "Diary of the British Agent Kabul", 8 November 1915. Foreign Department, Secret War, May 1916, Nos 1-288. N.A.I.
62. *ibid.*
63. The war party included besides Nasrullah, two sons of the Amir, Inayatullah and Amanullah, who also had the support of General Nadir Khan, the commander-in chief, and Mahmud Tarzi, the Foreign Minister. The whole party was in favour of war with the British, See Ludwig W. Adamec, *Afghanistan 1900-1923* (California, 1967), p. 90.
64. Note C.R. Cleveland on Silk Letters, 14 September 1916. Foreign Department, Frontier, Confidential A, 1918, Nos. 241-430, N.A.I.

65. *ibid.*
66. "Statement of Abdul Haq." *ibid.*
67. C.R. Cleveland : "Note on Silk Letters " 14 September 1914. *ibid.*
68. Mahendra Pratap, *My Life Story of Fifty Years* (Dehra Dun, 1951), p. 51.
69. See Appendix VI.
70. "Proclamation by the Provisional Government of India," Foreign Department, Frontier, Confidential A, 1918, Nos. 241-430. N.A.I.
71. *ibid.*
72. According to Budhraj this possibly meant the tribal belt, the Punjab and Baluchistan territories which Afghanistan had lost over the years to the Sikhs and the British. V.S. Budhraj, "The provisional Government of Independent India 1915-20", *Kurukshetra University Research Journal* (Kurukshetra), Vol. I, January 1967. However, the draft of the treaty which is available amongst the records of the Government of India contains no reference to the territories promised to the Amir. See Draft Treaty in Foreign Department, Frontier Confidential A, 1921, Nos. 12-13.
73. W. Griesinger, *German Intrigues in Persia, Afghanistan and India : Diary of a German Agent* (London, 1918), p. 38. Besides the messenger, a long cypher telegram was sent to Berlin setting down the terms on which the Amir was willing to enter war, but no reply was received. Foreign Department, Secret War, October 1917, Nos. 1-319. N.A.I.
74. Extract from Seiler's Diary, 23 May 1916. Foreign Department, Frontier, Confidential A, 1921, Nos. 12-13, N.A.I.
75. Roos Keppel to Chelmsford, 12 May 1916, "Roos-Keppel Papers," I.O.L.
76. Political and Secret Department F.No. 3443/1914, Part IV. I.O.L.
77. Foreign Department Secret War, June 1916, Nos. 1-212. N.A.I. The British and Russia had taken concerted steps in Persia and were jointly holding that country thus cutting off Afghanistan from the Turco-German block. Under such conditions neither the Germans nor the Turkish Governments could provide any military help to Afghanistan. Mahendra Pratap, *Afghanistan : The heart of Aryan* (n.d. China), p. 16.
78. Hardinge to Chamberlain, 27 February 1916, Hardinge Papers. The Government of India sent copies of two intercepted letters from the Germans in which they had made a reference to the extermination of the Amir in case he refused to declare war on the British. See also Lord Hardinge of Penhurst, *My Indian Years 1910-1916* (London, 1948), p. 133.

79. Moberly, op. cit., p 170. But the British Government admitted that Niedermayer and his mission laid the seeds of the trouble which India experienced on the North-West Frontier, in India and with Afghanistan from the summer of 1916 to 1920. *ibid.*
80. It is reported by the British Agent that the Amir was influenced so much by the Turcophile party and the Indian revolutionaries that he gave his consent to the publication and circulation of a pamphlet entitled "Rally under the Flag of Salvation and Eternal Happiness" inciting his subjects to a general *jihad* of which 15,575 copies were printed but before these were distributed, the Amir on the advice of his counsellors ordered the destruction of all the copies. Diary of the British Agent, Foreign Department, Frontier, Confidential A, 1918, Nos. 2-186. N.A.I.
81. Barkatullah's letter to German Foreign Office, 21 May 1916. German Foreign Office Records, Roll No. 400. See also Mahendra Pratap's letter to German Foreign Office, Appendix VII.
82. Viceroy to Secretary of State, 15 September 1916. Foreign Department Frontier Confidential A, 1918, Nos. 241-430. N.A.I.
83. The details of this treaty are not known. Mahendra Pratap who signed the treaty simply mentions it but makes no reference to its clauses See Mahendra Pratap, *My Life Story of Fifty Years*, p. 52.
84. Mahendra Pratap to the Governor of Russian Turkestan, 21 February 1916. Foreign Department, Frontier Confidential A, 1918, Nos. 241-430. N.A.I.
85. *ibid.*
86. Appendix to Meshed Diary, 30 September 1916. Foreign Department, Secret War, September 1917, Nos. 1-212, N.A.I.
87. India Office to Government of India, 1 February 1917. Foreign Department, Frontier Confidential A, 1918, Nos. 241-430. N.A.I.
88. O'Dwyer, op. cit , p. 173.
89. Mahmud Hassan and Obedullah had been working together for a pan-Islamic union before the war and when the war broke out, the former left for Mecca and the latter for Kabul. During his stay at Mecca Mahmud Hassan contacted Ghalib Pasha, Turkish Military Governor of Hedjaz and obtained from him a *fatwa* acknowledging him to be the leader of the Muslims and pledging assistance to him on behalf of the Turkish Government, and appealing to the Indian Muslims to stand by him. The substance of Ghalib Pasha's message was that Mahmud Hassan was to return to India and to issue a call to the Muslims to rise against the British. Mahmud Hassan sent his emissaries with copies of the *Galibnama* to India in order to prepare the ground for the contemplated rising. C.E.W. Sands: "Report on the Silk Letter

- Conspiracy". Political and Secret Department, F.No. 4260/1916. I.O.L.
90. C.E.W. Sands : "Report on the Silk Letter Conspiracy." Political and Secret Department, F. No. 4260/1916. I.O.L.
  91. "Summary of the Silk Letter Case," Appendix to notes. Foreign Department, Frontier Confidential A, 1918, Nos 241-430. N.A.I.
  92. *ibid.*
  93. C.E.W. Sands : "Report. on Silk Letter Conspiracy." Political and Secret Department, F.No. 4260/1916. Information about the activities of the Silk-letter conspirators was also supplied to the Government of India by Maulvi Muhammad Ahmed, Shams-ul Ulama of Deoband. Chief Secretary U.P. to "Secretary Home Department, Govt. of India, 12 December 1918. Home Political A, August 1919, Nos. 415-426. N.A.I.
  94. India Office Note, 4 November 1916. *ibid.*
  95. Ker, op. cit., p. 313. The letters by Obedullah were written in July 1916 while the revolt of the Sherif of Mecca occurred in June 1916. Most probably the Indian revolutionaries did not know about it.
  96. Michael O'Dwyer, op. cit., p. 181.
  97. Obedullah to Mahmud Hassan, 9 July 1916. Foreign Department, Frontier Confidential A, 1921, Nos. 12-13. N.A.I.
  98. The original letters from Bethmann-Hollweg to different Rajas and Nawabs with note in Mahendra Pratap's own hand were captured by the British Government and some of these are now available amongst the private papers of Lord Chelmsford. I.O.L.
  99. "Note by Mahendra Pratap regarding failure of the Kabul Mission." German Foreign Office Records, Roll No. 400. N.A.I.
  100. Note H.A. Grant, Foreign Secretary, 12 April 1916. Foreign Department, Confidential A Frontier, 1918, Nos. 241-430. N.A.I.



Top left : *Shyamaji Krishna Verma (1857-1930) p. 2*  
Top right : *Sardar Singhji Rewabhai Rana (1878-1957) p. 38*  
Bottom : *Vinayak Damodar Savarkar (1883-1966) p. 11*



Left : Madame Bhikhaji Rustom Cama (1861-1936) with the Indian National Flag which was unfurled at the International Socialist Congress, Stuttgart. p. 39

**A Message to the People of India**

Comrades! Look at your lives, I will not give you long time; only five minutes. I fully understand the responsibility of what I say. I have only prepared for everything. I have but one life to give, the price is worth it. I ought to write on Motherland, as I can not keep quiet, since our tyranny is going on in our country, and our daily deportations are said to be everyday, and all peaceful means are denied to us.

I have neither power, nor the authority to recommend this or that course to our patriotic countrymen. People who suffer in the East are the best judges of the methods to adopt. However I speak the truth and I know when I say that the result of the British will not affect the forward movement in the East. Are our people afraid? No! But the new situation are perhaps a little worse than the old ones. They may be greater in number but they cannot be more unjust in fact.

Some of you say that a woman should not be in politics. Well Sir, I had that feeling at one time. Three years ago it was impossible for me to talk of violence as a subject of discussion, but owing to the institutions, the hypocrisy, the inequality of the British, that feeling is gone. Why should we deplore the use of violence when our enemies do it to us? If we use force, it is because we are forced to use force. How is it that the Russian lady Petrovskaya and her comrades are tortured and thrown to the night of English men and English women while our countrymen are considered criminals for doing exactly the same thing for the same cause. If violence is regarded as human, why not in India? Tyranny is tyranny, and violence is violence, wherever applied. Violence justifies any action. Struggle for Freedom with the exception of violence. Government-rebellion against the foreign rule is patriotism. What is life without freedom? What is existence without principles? Friends, let us put aside all hesitations, doubts, and fears. In Gandhi's words I appeal to you. Let us stop arguing with people who know our opponents by heart and denigrate them. If for people appear degraded, it is an added reason to redouble our efforts to make them better. Show self-respect, Indians, and act to work. The days for calling ourselves as a passing condition are now over. Do silent but solid work. A handful of foreigners a few Englishmen have declared war on us. Who can wonder if we soldiers accept challenge and declare war on them? The price of Liberty must be paid. War is not for a without your risk it?

Tired Gandhi's eye people have learnt that it is a sin to tolerate despotism. They have learnt to combat without pause; they have learnt rather to die fearless than perish. We are not bound to the name of our power and in the name of our ancestors and our glorious country we fight our oppressors.

Twenty of five young men who are done to death, are burnt away just like insects in the name of Motherland. Bhai Bhausaheb. On the altar of truth, justice and liberty, these noble lives are sacrificed. The flag of Bhai Bhausaheb which I gave before you, was made for me by a noble fellow young patriot who is standing at the bar of the so called court of Justice in our country. What a mockery to talk of justice and jury!! We have seen such a mockery of justice in cases of Tilak and Potty! Why are they imprisoned and killed? For what? For speaking the truth.

Why that obnoxious emperor John Morley is always talking of his Western institutions and English law? We do not want his English institutions. We want back our own country. No English law is wanted in India. We have our own noble Banyan tree and our beautiful lotus flowers. We do not want to imitate British civilization. No Sir, we will have our own which is higher and nobler. What is Morley's civilization? Persecution of women? For what? For asking their human rights. What do I see all round in this country? Poverty, misery, robbery and despotism.

Hindustani! our Revolution is holy. Let us send our congratulations to our countrymen and women who are struggling against the British despotism and for their liberty. May their numbers be daily increased. May their organizations become ever so formidable. May our country be reconquered speedily. My only hope is life is to see our country free and united. I beg of you young men to march up! March forward, Friends, and lead our helpless, dying, down-trodden children of Motherland to the goal of Freedom in its right name. Let our motto be: We are all for India for Indians.

Bhikhaji Rustom Cama

Right : Madame Cama's message to the Indian people



Top left : *Madan Lal Dhingra (1887-1909) p. 17*  
Top right : *Tarak Nath Das (1884 1958) pp. 65-66*  
Bottom : *Virendranath Chattopadhyaya (1880-1940) p. 45*





Left : *Lala Har Dayal (1884-1939) pp. 69-70*

Right : *Yugantar Ashram established by Har Dayal at 436, Hill Street,  
San Francisco p. 72*











Jagat Ram



Nidhan Singh



Prof. Parmarand



Jowale Singh



Kesar Singh



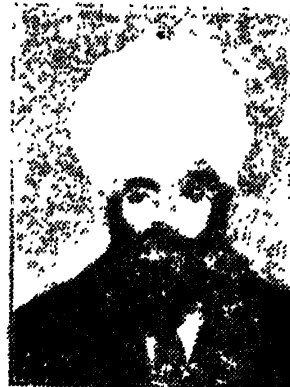
Pandit Singh



Piyara Singh



Sohan Singh



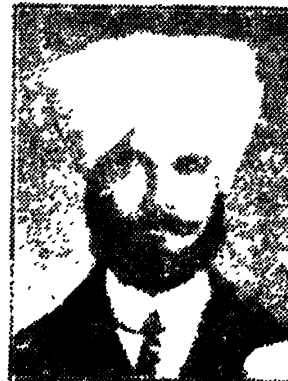
Bessa Kha Singh



Usham Singh



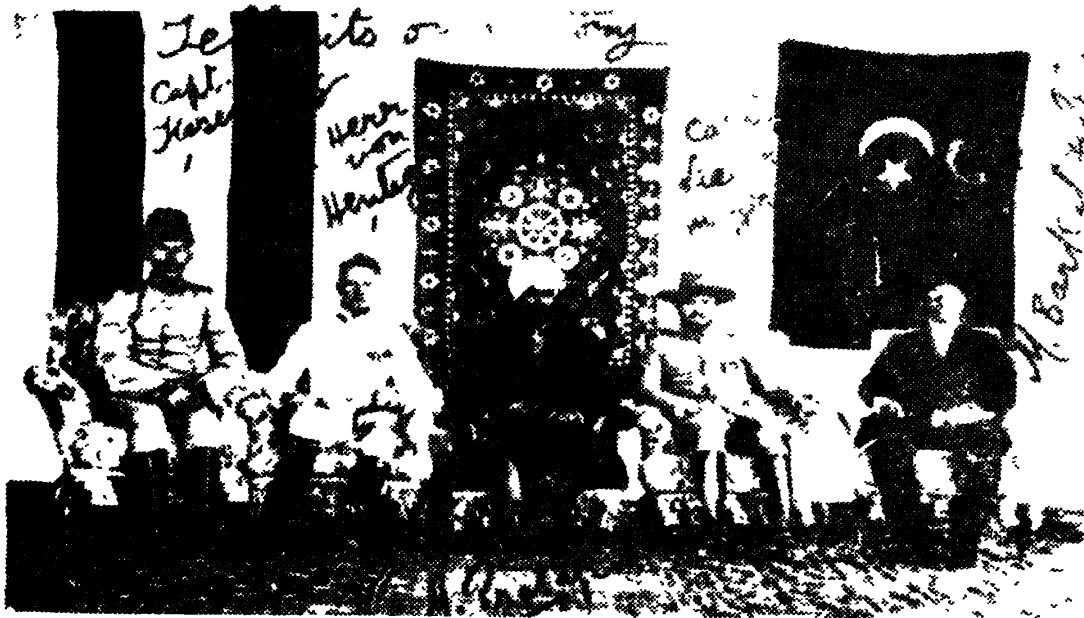
Mangal Singh



Mangal Singh

*Ghadr Heroes from the book "India Against British" (San Francisco 1916) pp. 95-105.*

These are the 120 who have been imprisoned...



**Top** : *Delegation to Russia sent by the Provisional Government of India under Dr. Muthura Singh and Muhammad Ali (seated) in 1916 p. 180.*

**Bottom** : *Members of the Mission to Kabul. (From left to right) Captain Kazim Beg, representative of the Turkish Government, Von Hentig, German Head of the Mission, Raja Mahendra Partap, Captain Oskar Von Niedermayer, military adviser and Maulvi Barkatullah. The writing on the photographs is that of Raja Mahendra Partap pp. 173-74.*



*Chandra Kanta Chakravarty with his German colleague, Earnest Mathias Sukume just before their arrest in New York by the American Police, p. 202.*





## Prosecution of the Indian Revolutionaries by the United States

### Split in the Ghadr Party

By the beginning of 1915, the Ghadr Party started working in close alliance with the Berlin Committee. The Committee maintained general supervision over the party's activities through the German Ambassador Count Bernstorff, who was in direct communication with the Indian revolutionaries through his agents in New York, Chicago and San Francisco.<sup>1</sup> For the successful implementation of the various schemes, the German Foreign Office had instructed its representatives in Manila, Batavia, Constantinople, Tokyo, Shanghai and Bangkok to direct the plans and to provide liberal financial assistance, if required, to the Indian revolutionaries. The execution of the schemes, however, was decided and controlled by cipher despatches and messages sent through special emissaries direct from Berlin.<sup>2</sup>

Gupta, the first accredited agent of the Berlin Committee in USA, left San Francisco on 25 August 1915 for Shanghai and Batavia for preparing a report on the progress of the Indian revolutionary movement in the Far East.<sup>3</sup> After his departure, Ram Chandra became the overall incharge of coordinating the activities. The repeated failure of the main schemes, however, led the Berlin Committee to recommend to the German Foreign Office, the name of Chandra Kanta Chakravarty, as there was "no one in America through whom further

work" could be undertaken "with the object of ensuring permanency and continuity in their efforts." Chakravarty assumed charge of the movement in the beginning of 1916 and was directed to carry on the work through a Committee of five members including himself.<sup>4</sup> He was further instructed to send agents to West Indies, Java, Sumatra, to have anti-British pamphlets printed and published in and from America for propaganda, and to implement with diligence the plan of a secret oriental mission to Japan for the despatch of arms and ammunition to India by an overland route through China.<sup>5</sup>

Chakravarty realised after his arrival in USA that the main problem before the Indian revolutionaries was the lack of arms and ammunition and after the failure of the *Maverick*, it had become well-nigh impossible for them to implement the scheme for a successful revolution. The various reports received from India convinced him of the necessity of sending arms to India. He promptly reported to Berlin that the secret organisation in India was almost complete and that while many of the old members of the party were active, some of them were afraid of premature uprisings in different parts of the country in case sufficient arms did not reach them soon enough. The Berlin Committee recommended the purchase of arms in Japan and sending them by an overland route to India. At the same time the Committee referred to the incapability of the workers of the Ghadr Party to carry on this work efficiently. The Committee had now no confidence in the Ghadr Party and was rather convinced that if they (Ghadrites) were again entrusted with this job, it would be ruined. It is just possible that the Berlin Committee had some inkling of the British agents who were enrolled as members of the Ghadr Party and they had expressed their concern on the leakage of their plans in Siam and Batavia to the German Foreign Office, but since no steps could be taken to discriminate between a spy and a genuine worker, they had allowed Chakravarty to recruit workers from British Guiana and East Africa and to avoid the Ghadrites.<sup>6</sup>

With the loss of confidence on the one side and the manoeuvring of the British agents on the other hand, it became difficult for the Ghadr Party to maintain its unity. The

symptoms of disunity became apparent with the arrival of Harish Chandra<sup>7</sup> and other workers from the Far East. Chakravarty noticed the rift in the Ghadr Party and sounded Berlin that it was in the process of breaking up as "Gurudwara, a Sikh religious organisation bribed by the British was trying to discredit Ghadr". It appears from Chakravarty's reports that some members of the Ghadr Party were accusing Ram Chandra of getting money from Germany and giving them nothing. The Berlin Committee had already lost faith in the ability of the Ghadrites and now the factional troubles in their ranks forced them to recommend to the German Foreign Office to stop further financial help to that party since in their view the Ghadr organisation was not doing the work justifying the expenditure of so large a sum of money.<sup>8</sup>

The Sikh religious organisation alluded to by Chakravarty was the Khalsa Diwan of Stockton, California, which had always opposed the handling of the finances of the Ghadr Party by Ram Chandra and had never tolerated his firm hold on the Ghadr organisation. When Har Dayal organised the party he collected a good deal of money from Stockton and the leaders of the Khalsa Diwan saw in the first place that funds were diverted to San Francisco, which would have otherwise been used for the local temple, and also that they were called upon to contribute largely to a movement in the control of which they had no share. The Ghadr organisation was mainly dependent upon the Sikhs for financial support and the Khalsa Diwan people very naturally felt that "considering their importance in the movement" they had "extremely little to say as to the manner in which it was carried on" by Ram Chandra (1889-1918) under instruction from Berlin and the money subscribed by them was not applied to revolutionary ends.<sup>9</sup>

There was some truth in the accusation of Chakravarty that the opposition of the Khalsa Diwan was instigated by the British agents.<sup>10</sup> That there was an all round deterioration of the relations between the various groups working in the United States is clear from the intercepted letter which pointed out that the conditions were absolutely hopeless in the US and no one was bothered about the cause. To be the leader or a prominent figure was the only motive. The Germans had

“also lost faith in our cause. They no longer trust any of us. Everybody is gradually slipping off from the field with the small amount of money at their disposal to make his own provision for the future.”<sup>11</sup>

The controversy regarding finances had widened. Bhagwan Singh and his followers insisted upon the checking of the accounts of the party. It appears from the British Intelligence report that in December 1916 Harish Chandra went to New York to obtain the intervention of Chakravarty and returned with orders, the first directing him in the name of the Indian National Party to inspect Ram Chandra's accounts and second urging Ram Chandra to preserve utmost secrecy about relations with Germany.<sup>12</sup> A thorough enquiry into the accounts of the Ghadr Party was conducted by two parties. One by Sunder Singh, the Auditor, who reported after having checked the whole account upto January 1917, that the account was correct but he showed his dissatisfaction about the amount for Bhagwan Singh expenses.<sup>13</sup> The other report was secretly prepared by Harish Chandra, the British Agent, who saw nothing but lack of honesty in the Pandit's (Ram Chandra's) account and confusion. He further mentioned that the funds of the party had been misused and had been spent on acquiring personal influence.<sup>14</sup>

The members of the faction led by Bhai Bhagwan Singh (1882-1962) with whom Harish Chandra had been very friendly held a meeting on 6 January 1917 “to discuss Harish Chandra's report on Ram Chandra's account,”<sup>15</sup> while the report of the Auditor was never discussed. In the subsequent meeting on 13 January Harish Chandra, however, stated that his first opinion on Ram Chandra's account had been hasty and after hearing the explanation of Ram Chandra, he had come to the conclusion that though Ram Chandra might have been careless, he had not been dishonest. However, this rectification did not bring any change in the general situation. The damage had been done and the two factions were at daggers drawn with each other.<sup>16</sup> As a result of these accusations, Ram Chandra resigned from the Ghadr Party and set up a new press at 1017, Valencia Street and published the first number of his new *Ghadr* on 7 February 1917, while Bhagwan Singh

captured the old organisation and became its leader. The split was complete. It appears from the evidence available that Ram Chandra was falsely accused of utilising the funds of the Ghadr Party for his own ends by a British Agent, because even the Director of Criminal Intelligence admits that Ram Chandra used "the German money for two main purposes, to subsidise his own supporters and to create a permanent fund which would make him independent of subscriptions,"<sup>17</sup> required for the running of the Ghadr Party. But by these manoeuvres the Government of India had been able to bring a rift in the Ghadr Party which resulted in its disorganisation. The entry of United States on 6 April 1917 "into the war gave the death blow" to its activities and it now became easier for the American authorities to prosecute them on the secret instigation of British Government of India, under the "violation of Neutrality Act."

### **San Francisco Trial**

Before the arrival of Har Dayal in the United States, the Government of India had taken a rather lenient view of the activities of the Indian revolutionaries in that country. The reports, no doubt, had been received during 1907-1908 that the United States was likely to become an important centre for Indian revolutionary activities. But they were satisfied with the attitude of the American Government, especially after Roosevelt had given them a clean certificate about their role in India. The Intelligence agents were, however, appointed for keeping a watch over the Indian revolutionaries. Their complacent attitude was shaken when Har Dayal organised the revolutionary movement and started, publishing from 1 November 1913, the *Ghadr*. The British authorities began to realise the dangers of the revolutionary propaganda. They nearly succeeded in the arrest of Har Dayal but his expulsion from the United States did not retard the activities of the Ghadr Party, instead the movement gained strength and vigour after his departure. The Government of India accepted that the arrest of Har Dayal had done some good, but it was not so advantageous as a thorough investigation into the affairs of the individuals connected with the Yugantar Ashram might

prove.<sup>18</sup> Agreeing with the Indian Government, the Foreign Office requested Spring-Rice to sound the US Government confidentially with a view to investigating the activities of the Ghadr Party.<sup>19</sup> Spring-Rice carefully considered the views of the Foreign Office, but regarded it rather dangerous for the prestige of the British Government to take such a step and advised caution. The arguments which he advanced were based on the deep study of the political atmosphere in the United States. He reported that the United States Government was perfectly aware of the conspiracy which was being carried from the United States territory. That the anarchists of all nations were working together and were in close alliance with the Industrial Workers of the world. Even if the US Government were willing to take strong action, he argued, there were influences which prevented them to do so. If, he added, a foreign Government complained against the proceedings of the anarchists, they might appeal with sure success to the traditional doctrine of this country which had been a place of refuge for the oppressed of all nations. The least suspicion that the British Government had made representation against the proceedings of the British Indians here, Spring-Rice believed, would at once call to arms the anti-British sentiment of the whole country and especially set in motion the Irish and Irish-German agencies in the press.<sup>20</sup>

At the outbreak of the war the Government of India, however, sent a strong representation for the suppression of the *Ghadr* publication. The US Government replied diplomatically saying that they were not in a position to take any action as there were no federal laws covering the publication of seditious, revolutionary or anarchical matter.<sup>21</sup> During 1915 the verbal representation by Spring-Rice did not bring any satisfactory results, and the Indian revolutionaries continued their anti-British activities. Relying upon the suggestion of Spring-Rice, India Office asked the Government of India to send the details of all the outrages in the Punjab and elsewhere, in which returned emigrants from USA, were involved especially after the war, in order to forcefully back their representation as an "example of the practical results of the Ghadr doctrine" in India.<sup>22</sup>

By the middle of 1915, after collecting sufficient information through various means regarding the dangerous activities of the Ghadr Party in India and their alliance with the German Government, the Government of India again approached the Foreign Office who again sounded Spring-Rice. They referred to the good deal of evidence now available regarding the connection between the German Embassy and the Indians in the United States to promote a revolution in India and enquired whether the time was favourable for official representation or should it be postponed.<sup>23</sup>

The case was not very strong and Spring-Rice was not certain whether the US Government would take any action since they seemed to fear the consequences of such action unless the (public opinion) was prepared to go to all length.<sup>24</sup> He again suggested the collection of more material to convince the US Government that the Indian revolutionaries were committing a great breach of neutrality in the United States by using their territory for intrigues.<sup>25</sup> Subsequent representations convinced the British authorities that the US Government was hesitant to take any serious action against the revolutionary activities of the Indians. Analysing the reasons behind the US policy and their evasive attitude, Spring-Rice reported that in the first place the laws of the United States did not allow the deportation of an alien for political offences. Secondly, it was obviously difficult for the Washington Cabinet to take strong measures against Indian sedition, when one of their members, Mr Bryan,<sup>26</sup> had recently published his notorious diatribe entitled "British Rule in India" which gave direct encouragement to all who wanted to overthrow the Government of the King Emperor. Thirdly, there was a sentimental feeling in the US in favour of any outlaws or schemes for overthrowing established "monarchical governments". Besides, the American public and the press, with a strong voice in the Government were not interested in maintaining British rule in India. Spring-Rice reported about the verbal reply which he had received from the US Department of Justice, that unless proofs were given of the action fitting out of military operation in the United States, the US law did not provide any remedy.<sup>27</sup>



Spring-Rice in desperation made suggestions by which it was possible to put a break to the activities of the Indian revolutionaries. He wrote that if, it could be shown that the US territory was being used as a plotting ground for murders, bomb outrage, etc., the whole matter would definitely receive serious consideration and secondly, he alluded to the constant references in the *Ghadr* and other publications of the party and in the speeches of the Ghadr leaders to the extermination of the Whites and in his view if public opinion here got the idea that the (Indian) revolutionaries were plotting a colour war against the Whites, "neither laws nor constitution nor anything else" would "enable them to remain in the country any longer". He was keen that some newspapers might be hired for the purpose of exposing this side of the activity of the Indian revolutionaries.<sup>28</sup> The Foreign Office willingly accepted the first suggestion but viewed the second proposal as "a most dangerous one" and informed Spring-Rice that "no action of the kind should be taken."<sup>29</sup>

Subsequent conspiracy trials in India in which a number of Ghadrites were convicted gave the Government of India enough material to back up their case. An elaborate memorandum was prepared and sent alongwith the original text of the Judgement in the Lahore Conspiracy Case and the Lahore Supplementary Case. Spring-Rice placed the whole case before the US Department of Justice. The case as presented pointed concretely to the existence of a countrywide organisation based in US, attempting "to promote armed rising in India calculated to embarrass His Majesty's Government in the conduct of war against Germany and her allies". The memorandum further listed the various events connected with the shipment of arms and ammunition from America and the other Indo-German schemes concocted there. The response from the US authorities was again very lukewarm. They informed that from time immemorial plots against foreign countries had been engineered in the United States and that except in the case of plots to assassinate foreign rulers, the Federal authorities were legally powerless to intervene and that they had no facility of issuing orders in Council.<sup>30</sup> The reply of the US Government dampened the hopes of the Government of India. The British Foreign Office

though not ready to accept defeat also realised that the position was serious and the continued toleration of Indian intrigues in the United States constituted so grave a menace against them that they secretly instructed Spring-Rice to bring the subject again to the notice of the United States Government and "inform them that His Majesty's Government cannot regard their present negligence towards such intrigues as compatible with the duties of neutrality."<sup>31</sup>

In the personal meeting with the US Secretary of State, Spring-Rice made it quite clear that if United States Government had finally decided that they could do nothing, "His Majesty's Government would have to take their own measures as they could not be expected to sacrifice the Empire for want of American legislation."<sup>32</sup>

These diplomatic threats, however, could not bring any change in the US Government's attitude towards the Indian revolutionaries. While the Government of India was too anxious to crush the Indian revolutionaries, the US Government was rather hesitant to do so, may be on account of the large public opinion which supported the Indian cause. Since the Government of India failed in their attempts to check the Indian revolutionary movement by making a direct approach to the US Government, they resorted to underhand methods.<sup>33</sup> As shown earlier, they were able to sow seeds of dissension through their agents in the ranks of the Ghadr Party. In the beginning of 1917, they sent one of their Intelligence Agents to work with William Wiseman, Chief of British Intelligence in the US for the prosecution of Chakravarty, who was viewed as the most important member of the Indian National Party, Berlin. The British Intelligence Officer known by the name of Napier, at first, rather cautiously, "started negotiations with the authorities for Chakravarty's arrest",<sup>34</sup> but failed in his efforts. Later on he convinced the Police about the implication of Chakravarty in a bomb plot<sup>35</sup> in India and about his having a false passport.

The case was not strong, Napier mentioned the possibility of the failure of prosecution of Chakravarty to the Foreign Office. After reviewing the whole case India Office suggested that in the event of such a failure "extradition might

be tried and that if there were obstacles, we might offer the United States Von Rintelan in exchange."<sup>36</sup> The idea behind the prosecution of Chakravarty was that his arrest was likely to reveal the concrete proofs about the collaboration of Germany and Indians plotting in the United States against the British Government. After a good deal of secret negotiations the American police ultimately arrested Chakravarty and his close friend and colleague, a German named Ernst Mathias Sekhuma on 6 March 1917. Chakravarty's arrest brought out the needed evidence—the connection of Indians with the Germans in the conspiracy against the British Government. For the Foreign Office, the information that the Germans were implicated was very important because "otherwise the United States authorities might not be willing to prosecute the Indians."<sup>37</sup> The British Agent referred to the great interest that the press was taking in the affair, mainly due to the fact that it was intimately connected in the public mind with the many revelations regarding German intrigues in their country. He further hinted that the time was most propitious for an exposure of the German-Indian plot.<sup>38</sup> The Federal authorities also believed that the arrests were likely to be a prelude to a countrywide round up of "aliens of various nationalities" who had taken advantage of American neutrality to plot on their soil against the Allies.<sup>39</sup>

But before the American authorities consented to take any action against the Indian revolutionaries, they asked for an assurance from the Foreign Office, in view of the diplomatic correspondence between the two Governments on the subject of Indian and German intrigues in the United States and the charges made by the British Government that such intrigues were being fomented and fostered on American territory through the negligence of US authorities. Mr Lansing from the Department of State, US Government, made clear to the British representative that the American Government was "unwilling to cooperate in the manner desired or to furnish British officials with any evidence or other information regarding such intrigues or plots, unless His Majesty's Government agreed not to regard the action of the United States authorities in furnishing the information as

an admission of hostility for alleged breaches of neutrality or for any other cause and not to use information so gained against US in any claim or charge of such liability.”<sup>40</sup> The British Ambassador wrote to the Foreign Office explaining the advantages of giving the assurance immediately in view of the fact that the US Government had to take up the case against themselves and he feared that “popular demand would prevent dropping of the case”, if the assurance was not given immediately. The Foreign Office agreed to the above demand of United States and in lieu of this the latter gave the undertaking to deal with the plots hatched in the United States against India. They even agreed to conduct thorough investigation in close cooperation with the British Intelligence officers and to prosecute Ram Chandra or anyone else against whom evidence was obtained of breaches against United States Laws.<sup>41</sup>

During the middle of these negotiations the United States entered the War on 6 April 1917 on the side of the Allies. Soon after in May 1917 Ram Chandra and seven other Indians were arrested and indicted by the Federal Grand Jury on a charge of conspiracy to form a military enterprise against Great Britain.<sup>42</sup>

The Government of India sent Mr Denham, from the Intelligence Department to help the US Department of Justice with all the important papers which were to be of great assistance for the prosecution of the Indian revolutionaries. Another British agent who helped the US authorities was Marr, who worked under the name of Robertson from the US Department of Justice. His identity was concealed from everyone because of the fear that capital might be made of it if it were known that anyone from the British side was helping the US Government.<sup>43</sup> In June secret conferences took place between the Attorney-General, and District Attorney and other high officials and it was decided to make all the cases into a case of general conspiracy to aid the Germans by creating revolution in India during the War<sup>44</sup>. In the opinion of a contemporary observer, there was no intention to deal too severely with the Indian revolutionaries on the part of the US authorities. However, it was not possible for them to pass over so open an action as was carried on by them in the United States and that

too in alliance with the German Government.<sup>45</sup> The trial which came to be known as Hindu-German Conspiracy Trial<sup>46</sup> was held in San Francisco and lasted from 20 November 1917 to 24 April 1918. The trial was a great diplomatic triumph for the British Government who had struggled for nearly four years to crush the activities of the Indian revolutionaries in America. The actual indictment of conspiracy to set on foot a military enterprise from within the territory of the United States against India, was against ninety-seven persons, but only thirty-five were apprehended and were actually put on trial.<sup>47</sup> Of the thirty-five, nine were German subjects, four German-Americans five Americans and seventeen Indians. Amongst the Germans were the officials of the former German Consulate-General of Francisco, Franz Bopp, Consul-General, E.H. Von Sehack, Vice-Consul, H. Kaufmann, Chancellor, and W. Von Brincken, attached to the Consulate.<sup>48</sup> The proceedings of the trial revealed the global aspect of the conspiracy to overthrow the British Government in India. It was a conspiracy that had centres in Berlin, in San Francisco, in New York, in Honolulu, in Shanghai, in Japan, in Bangkok, in Calcutta, in Batavia and in South America.<sup>49</sup> It also showed the utter lack of interest amongst the American officials regarding British domination of India. Allied with the indifference towards British rule was the genuine and traditional sympathy of the Americans for the oppressed people of the world. No attempt was made during the trial to conceal the fact that United States was a political asylum, a refuge for all oppressed nations, and the country which had always shown extraordinary sympathy for movements towards human progress and freedom.<sup>50</sup> The prosecution lawyer, US District Attorney, Joan Preston no doubt ruthlessly attacked the alliance of the Indian revolutionaries with Germany yet he openly admitted that.

**we are not interested in British rule in India, we are not interested in it at all. We do not care anything about it. We do not care if they (Indians) feel they ought to be independent, it is perfectly proper for any race to feel that way, we do not object to that at all, but what I am concerned is this that they should not use our territory as a**

**breeding ground for their propositions.<sup>51</sup>**

However, it was the Defence Counsel Mr George A. Macgowan, who took considerable pains to explain to the Jury the strong aspirations of the Indians for independence which compelled them to start a conspiracy in the land of freedom. He pleaded that it was not a pleasant thing for a man to be a member of a subject race. And for that reason, he continued, "you cannot blame these members of a subject race when they leave that country and come in contact with Western civilization and imbibe its ideas of freedom."<sup>52</sup>

The proceedings of the trial further brought out that the US Government did not convict the Indian revolutionaries for their "perfectly patriotic and laudable desire to free their country from English rule", by revolutionary methods but their alliance with Germany for that purpose violated the neutrality laws of the United States.

The whole case in the words of Macgowan was being tried at the initiation of the British Government. The United States Government had never found anything seditious in the writings of these defendants.<sup>53</sup> The proceedings of the Court came to a tragic end with the murder of Ram Chandra in the Court room by Ram Singh, who belonged to Bhagwan Singh's group. Ram Singh himself was shot dead by the Marshal of the Court. Ram Chandra was suspected by the Ghadr Party as a British Agent, though there was no truth in it.<sup>54</sup>

The Jury "rendered a verdict of guilty as to each and every defendant excepting the defendant John F. Craigh as to whom it rendered a verdict of not guilty"<sup>55</sup> The American Judge W.C. Von Fleet sentenced the guilty defendants to various terms of imprisonment and fines. He placed the guilt for the conspiracy on the German Supreme Command. The sentences were very mild as compared with those carried out by the British Government in India against the India revolutionaries in the various conspiracy trials.<sup>56</sup>

While the trial of the Indian revolutionaries was a great diplomatic triumph for the British Government, it also brought the question of India's freedom before the America public. The trial stirred up the whole of America. Americans became

aware of the existence of an Indian revolt against British rule in India which was important enough to have thoroughly alarmed the British, and for its Foreign Office have struggled for more than four years to get the conviction of the Indians. All the American newspapers gave wide publicity to the proceedings of the trial. The British Foreign office was desirous of getting the deportation of those convicted, but the Government of India believed that in view of the impression created by the trials these persons were better left in America for considerable time to come. They advised against deportation.<sup>57</sup> But the real reason which forced the Government of India to drop the idea of deportation of the Indians was that the public opinion in America was not in its favour and even a slight rumour regarding deportation had resulted in the flooding of the US Department of Justice with a large number of protests.<sup>58</sup> The smallness of the sentences given to the Indians in San Francisco did disappoint the authorities both in India as well as in England, but they satisfied themselves with the conviction that mattered and not the actual sentences.<sup>59</sup>

However, after the trial—the popularity of the Ghadr Party was eclipsed by many other associations started by Indians on slightly different ideological base and at the same time it focused the attention of the American public towards the Indian problem and the Indian freedom was never short of American sympathisers from this time onward. The writings of Mrs Besant and her followers, Lala Lajpat Rai and Mr Hyndman in the American press now attracted more attention than the revolutionary activities of the Ghadr Party.<sup>60</sup> The Ghadr Party continued its activities, and after the Russian Revolution, its energies were diverted into the large stream of international communism.<sup>61</sup>

Two of its representatives attended the Fourth Congress of the Communist International held at Moscow in November 1922. This contact with Moscow and support offered by the Communist International gave a fillip to the movement. It expanded its activities and with the help of some of the old Ghadrites in India formed the Workers and Peasants Party in 1925 in India. The Kabul branch of the party was also re-established.<sup>62</sup>

In fact the Ghadr Party carried on its anti-British propaganda till India achieved Independence, when it was decided to disband it and buildings and other assets be turned over to the Indian Government. In 1948 the transfer was made to the Indian Government through the Indian Consul-General at San Francisco.

### **The Dissolution of the Indian National Party, Berlin**

The prosecution of the Indians by the US Government resulted in the weakening of the Ghadr Party in America, and also, it brought cracks in the strong wall of alliance which had been steadily built by the Indian revolutionaries with Germany. Almost all the plans organised with the assistance of Germany for the overthrow of the British Government in India were unsuccessful and now the San Francisco Trial proved an effective barrier for any further collaboration between Germany and the Indians in America. The Berlin Committee decided to reorganise their work outside India on a different and more centralised basis.<sup>63</sup> The German Foreign Office, though not very happy over the results of their alliance with the Indians, still agreed to the proposal of the latter for the establishment of effective propaganda centres in neutral countries. It was intended to acquaint the neutral powers with the aims and political aspirations of the Indians with a view to their ultimate projection at the Peace Conference. The task was not easy. The European powers were too busy with their own problems created by the war to take any serious notice regarding the demand of self-determination by the oppressed nations.

Despite the indifferent attitude of the European powers, the Indian revolutionaries went ahead with their plans and established a Propaganda Bureau in early May 1917, at Stockholm, Sweden. The Bureau functioned under a separate Committee known as the Central European Committee of the Indian nationalists quite independent from the control of the German Foreign Office.

Two prominent Indians associated with this Bureau were Chattopadhyaya and Acharya. Their aims as explained by Chattopadhyaya in an interview was that they were pleading for self-government for India independent of British control and



they wanted the socialists to support them in this. By this time Har Dayal was also somewhat reconciled and had expressed the wish to join the Indian revolutionaries in Stockholm. In a letter to Datta, he made a proposal, after having studied the European politics, that it was necessary for them to start a socialist paper and join the rearguard of the socialist parties.<sup>64</sup> The proposal in the view of the Indian Committee in Stockholm was highly ridiculous as there was "no such thing as a socialist party in India and one Indian in a European capital does not constitute a socialist party."<sup>65</sup> This was perhaps the most impractical move which the Indian revolutionaries thought of. It is just possible that had they accepted the proposal of Har Dayal, they could never have faced the sad situation, and the cold reception which they received at the International Socialist Congress at Stockholm which they attended. Though not desirous of forming the Socialist Party, the Indian revolutionaries alongwith the Theosophists in Stockholm were endeavouring to communicate with Lenin's Executive Committee for India and with the Committee in Central Asia.<sup>66</sup> Their main aim in attending the International Socialist Congress at Stockholm was to excite sympathy for Indian nationalist aspirations among Russian extremists and other Socialist leaders of Europe. At the Conference they explained to the delegates the nature of their programme and presented a brief on the political aspirations of the Indian people and impressed upon them the necessity of discussing the questions relating to the subject nations. They further requested the delegates to allow them to represent India at the Conference. The attitude of the delegates from different countries was not very encouraging. They were told that India could not be represented as there was no socialist party and that if Indians were allowed to speak at previous International Socialist Congress, it was "as private people who had been introduced to the Congress by the English socialists".<sup>67</sup> Unlike the International Socialist Congress at Stuttgart, where Madame Cama got ovation from the delegates, this Congress left a very sad impression on the Indian revolutionaries. Chattopadhyaya could realise after coming into contact with the delegates that the question of subject nationalities was being deliberately ignored or put off by the socialists, and there was

no sympathy for India or for its people.<sup>68</sup>

The main task of the Stockholm Bureau, which worked under different names<sup>69</sup> was to carry on the anti-British propaganda partly through pamphlets and other writings and partly through newspaper articles.<sup>70</sup> The Bureau translated a number of articles from Russian, Serbian and Hindi into Swedish which were published in the newspapers all over Sweden.<sup>70a</sup> Not much was achieved in Stockholm since the Swedish Government was favourable towards the *Entente* powers. Any anti-British propaganda was kept under strict official check. Moreover to counteract the propaganda of the Indian revolutionaries, the British Government sent Yusuf Ali to Sweden.<sup>71</sup> Meanwhile, the success of the Russian revolution encouraged the Indian revolutionaries abroad. Letters of congratulations were sent to the Russian Workers' and Soldiers' Council for their victory but they were also reminded that the peace conditions proposed by the Council did not mention the fundamental question of India, Egypt and Ireland. They were requested to fight the shameful and pitiless Imperialism of England at Paris Conference as well as during the peace negotiations.<sup>72</sup>

Alongwith this appeal to the Russian people, the Bureau widely circulated a pamphlet, "Self-Government for India" amongst all the European Governments. In the pamphlet it was impressed upon the European powers that there could be no world peace without Indian freedom. The powers were requested to demand full autonomy for India and to apply to her the principle of nationality which England's other allies declared themselves to be the champions.<sup>73</sup>

The Indian revolutionaries also contemplated sending of a deputation to President Wilson of America with a view to request him for the inclusion of an Indian representative when the rights of the small nationalities were to be discussed at the end of the war or at any other time. Though no deputation was sent to President Wilson but an appeal was despatched in which it was mentioned that permanent world peace was impossible without the final abolition of British militarism in India and other countries of Asia. They demanded that India should be represented at the general peace negotiation.<sup>74</sup>

Besides the propaganda for self-determination, the Indian

revolutionaries started establishing their contacts with the Russian revolutionaries.<sup>75</sup>

Towards the end of 1918, Indian Independence Committee, Berlin, decided to dissociate themselves from Germany. A report on the final liquidation of their affairs was sent to the German Foreign Office in which they thanked the latter for the assistance it had given for the national freedom of India during the war.<sup>76</sup> They further pointed out that "whatever interpretation their mutual enemies give to this it had been inspiring to them and had opened new vistas before the eyes of the Indian public".<sup>77</sup> The Berlin Committee was finally dissolved on 6 December 1918.

The Indian revolutionaries, no doubt, failed in their objective to overthrow the British Government by an armed revolution, yet their alliance with Germany was not without its effects. The propaganda carried on by them placed the Indian problem before the whole world for the first time and made it one of the most important issues in international affairs.<sup>78</sup> In the opinion of Tilak, the great extremist leader, the propaganda of the Indian revolutionaries with the help of Germany led to the "spreading of a knowledge of India's cause and conditions", which she "alone and unaided could never have attempted and in a far wider circle". Practically every country in the world experienced the German propaganda penetration, and in it, India held a prominent position. In his view all this could be utilised by India in her future campaigns.<sup>79</sup>

### References

1. Memorandum on the Organisation of the Ghadr Conspiracy, U.S. Department of Justice Record, Roll No. 4. N.A.I.
2. *ibid.*
3. Weekly report D.C.I. 21 December 1915. Home Political B, December 1915, Nos. 709-11 N.A.I.
4. Indian Independence Committee to German Foreign Office 10 January 1916 German Foreign Office Records, Roll No. 398. The Committee

consisted of besides C. K. Chakravarty, Srinivasan Wagel, S.M. Pager, Ram Chandra and Leo Lung. U.S. Department of Justice Records, Roll No. 6. N.A.I.

5. *ibid.*
6. Indian Independence Committee to German Foreign Office 10 January 1916. German Foreign Office Records, Roll No. 398. N.A.I.
7. Harish Chandra accompanied Mahendra Pratap to Europe and when the latter was entrusted with the mission to Afghanistan, Harish Chandra was asked to go back to India to do some work for the Berlin Committee. On his way to India, Harish Chandra revealed all the plans of the Indian revolutionaries to the British authorities in London. See Foreign Office No. 371/3067/1917. Chakravarty suspected Harish Chandra as a British agent when he met him in New York. Lala Lajpat Rai had the same suspicion. See V.C. Joshi (ed.), *Lajpat Rai : Autobiographical Writings* (New Delhi, 1969), pp. 2, 15. Other agents working on behalf of the British in the USA were Jawala Singh and Gobind Ram, quite active members of the Ghadr party. Spring-Rice to F.O. 10 February 1916. F.O. 371/2785/1916. P.R.O.
8. U.S. Department of Justice Records, Roll No. 6. N.A.I.
9. Note by G.C. Denham, 23 June 1916. Commerce and Industry Emigration A, November 1916, Nos. 1-16. N.A.I.
10. Besides Harish Chandra, the Government of India had other Indians who were working with the Ghadr Party as their paid agents. They were V.D. Bagai, who supplied the most valuable information. British Ambassador to Foreign Office, 28 December 1915, Foreign Office, No. 371/2787/1916; P.H.E. Pandian, and Jagjit Singh Attwal, Foreign Office Memorandum 9 November 1915, No. 371/2784/1916. About Bagai, Lajpat Rai writes that he "also confessed that he received regular salary from the British." V.C. Joshi (ed), *op. cit.* p. 217.
11. Roy to Rash Behari Bose, 8 January 1917. Foreign Department, Confidential B, Ext. Section B, 1917, Nos. 495-521. N.A.I.
12. Report D.C.I. 17 March 1917. Home Poll. B, March 1917, Nos. 625-628. N.A.I.
13. Trial Records, p. 2606. I.O.L.
14. *ibid.*, pp. 3764-65.
15. Ker, *op. cit.*, p. 279.
16. Report D.C.I. 28 April 1917. Home Political B, April 1917, Nos. 700-703. N.A.I.
17. Report D.C.I. 31 March 1917. Home Political B, March 1917, Nos. 625-28. However, according to the records of the U.S. Department of Justice "the split in the Ghadr Party was largely due to the

- failure of Ram Chandra to account for the disbursement of German Secret funds". U.S. Department of Justice, Roll No. 4. Another report says that Ram Chandra, a man of secret disposition kept affairs well in his own hands, especially the finances over which he kept a tight hold. An account was opened in the name of the Hindustan Association, but the large amount of the National Fund he kept in his own name and it was in this account, the money received from German sources was kept. "Summary of San Francisco Trial", F.O. No. 371/3427. P.R.O.
18. Viceroy to Secretary of State 17 March 1914. F.O. 371/2152/1914. P.R.O.
  19. Foreign office to Spring-Rice 6 April 1914. *ibid.*
  20. Spring-Rice to Grey 7 March 1914. F.O. 371/2152/1914. P.R.O.
  21. Department of State, Washington to Spring-Rice, 10 September 1914. F.O. No. 371/1780/1914. P.R.O.
  22. Note by A. Hirtzel, Permanent Under-Secretary of State, 25 March 1915. Political and Secret Department, F. No. 544/1915, Part I. I.O.L.
  23. Foreign Office to Spring-Rice 19 August 1915. Home Political Deposit, October 1915, No. 43. N.A.I.
  24. Spring-Rice to Foreign Office, 21 August 1915. *ibid.*
  25. Spring-Rice to Foreign Office, 15 November 1915. F.O. No. 371/2786/1916. The Director of Criminal Intelligence was rather disgusted with the attitude taken by the U.S. Government. He was of the opinion that the Ghadr publication was of such a nature that any neutral power "ought to forbid and prevent its circulation in its jurisdiction. The literature is all openly composed, printed and published in San Francisco and the fact that nothing has been done in USA for a whole year to stop it makes me feel disgusted with that neutral country." C.R. Cleveland note dated 6 February 1915. Home Political B, June 1915, Nos. 60-88. N.A.I.
  26. W.J. Bryan (U.S. Secretary of State 1913-15) wrote the pamphlet "British Rule in India" when he visited India in 1906. The pamphlet to which the British Ambassador referred was reprinted by the Ghadr Party for propaganda purposes in 1914-15. Bryan himself explained to Spring-Rice when the latter protested unofficially about the circulation of the pamphlet that "it is not an accurate reproduction of my original statement. A considerable part has been omitted. Those who know my views know that I am as much opposed to colonisation under American as under the rule of any other country". Bryan to Spring-Rice, 16 August 1915, F.O. No 371/2495/1915. P.R.O.
  27. Memo. War Office. F.O. No. 371/2786/1916. P.R.O.

28. Spring-Rice to Foreign Office, 18 April 1916. *ibid.*
29. *ibid.*
30. Lansing to Spring-Rice, 25 September 1916. F.O. No. 371/2788/1916. P.R.O.
31. Foreign Office to Spring-Rice, 21 September 1916. Foreign Department Confidential B External Section B, 1917. Nos. 366-401. N.A.I.
32. *ibid.*
33. J.S. Bains, "The Ghadr Party—A Golden Chapter of Indian Nationalism", *Indian Journal of Political Science* (Delhi), Vol. XXIII, 1962, p. 58.
34. Napier to Foreign Office, 11 March 1917. Foreign Office, No. 371/3065/1917. P.R.O.
35. The implication was based on the complicity of Chakravarty in the Alipore Bomb Case in India 1908.
36. India Office to Foreign Office 28 March 1917. Judicial and Public Department, F. No. 5784/1917. Instead of Chakravarty, the Government of India wanted Bhagwan Singh in exchange for Von Rintelan. *ibid.*
37. Notes. F.O. No. 371/3065/1917.
38. Napier to Wallinger dated 12 March 1916. *ibid.*
39. *New York Times*, 7 March 1917, p. 1, quoted by K.K. Banerjee, *op. cit.*, p. 5.
40. Spring-Rice to Foreign Office, 16 March 1917. F.O. No. 371/3065/1917. P.R.O.
41. Telegram from Washington dated 17 March 1917. *ibid.*
42. Spring-Rice to Foreign Office, 2 May 1917. *ibid.*
43. Judicial and Public Department F. No. 5784/1918. I.O.L.
44. Napier to Foreign Office dated 11 March 1917. Judicial and Public Department, F. No. 5784/1917. I.O.L.
45. George Freeman to Madame Cama, 29 May 1917. *ibid.*
46. Officially mentioned as USA versus Franz Bopp, German Consul-General at San Francisco, and others. The American Press reported it as Hindu-German Conspiracy Case. See *New York Times*, 1917-18. Popularly known as San Francisco Trial.
47. "Summary San Francisco Trial." F.O. No. 371/3427/1918. The cost of the trial according to the official estimate was : the Jurors fees said to be 3,000 dollars, the transcript of Records cost \$30,000 and other expenses incurred by the Government were estimated at \$250,000. *ibid.*

48. "Summary of San Francisco Trial," F.O. 371/3427/1918. P.R.O.
49. Trial Records, p. 6550.
50. *ibid.*, p. 661.
51. *ibid.*, p. 6780.
52. *ibid.*, p. 6595.
53. *ibid.*, p. 6595. The Foreign Office regarded the statement of George Macgowan as "a most disgraceful and scandalous tirade against British Rule in India". F.O. No. 371/3427/1918. The American Press also extolled the efforts of Indians for the overthrow of the British Government. See U.S. Department of Justice Records, Roll No. 2.
54. From Editor *Ghadr* to Inder Singh, 10 August 1918. F.O. No. 371/4243/1919.
55. Court Records, p. 7076.
56. See Appendix VIII. "Summary of the Criminal Cases arising out of Ghadr Movement" alongwith the statement of punishment awarded to Indians in San Francisco Case.
57. Government of India to Foreign Office F.O. No. 371/3426/1918. It also appears from the views expressed by the various Government officials in the Home Department that they were against their coming back to India. The Director of Criminal Intelligence recommended that these Indian revolutionaries should be either left in America or confined in some other country. e.g., England as their return might give a fresh impetus to anti-British activities in India. See Notes. Home Political A, November 1918, Nos. 142-163. N.A.I.
58. The *Dial* wrote : "It is a disgrace to America that at the present time six Hindus are facing charges for deportation to India. These Hindus are charged with the violation of some of the statutes of War, but it is obvious to the unprejudicial that in so far as they may have broken any law of the country, it has been unintentional and without malice. Their sole purpose was the emancipation of India from the autocratic foreign rule namely that of the British. Their offence is thus purely political and violation of American law only in a technical sense." US Department of Justice Records, Roll No. 2. The American Civil Liberties Union then headed by Roger N. Baldwin entered the American scene with a view to securing justice for India's patriotic sons. See Haridas T. Majumdar, *op. cit.*, p. 9. Another association "The Friends of Freedom for India" was organised by Agnes Smedley and Sailendranath Ghose to protest against the deportation of Indians convicted in the US. Home Political B, August 1919, Nos. 432-435. N.A.I.
59. D.C.I. report 27 July 1918. Home Political B, August 1918, Nos, 208-13. N.A.I.

60. Viceroy to Secretary of State, 24 November 1919. Home Political A, May 1920, Nos. 245-58. N.A.I.
61. Mark Naidis, "Propaganda of the Ghadr Party", *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. XX, 1915, p. 260.
62. *The Ghadr Directory* (New Delhi, 1934), p. 2.
63. Berlin Committee to German Foreign Office 7 February 1917. German Foreign Office Records, Roll No. 399. The Indian revolutionaries were even thinking of negotiating for some large business transactions with outside countries, after the war, so that the profits could be utilised for carrying on the struggle for India's Independence more effectively. *ibid.*
64. Har Dayal to B.N. Datta, 18 March 1918. German Foreign Office Records, Roll No. 400. N.A.I.
65. Indian Committee Stockholm to B.N. Datta, 4 April 1918. *ibid.*
66. Foreign Office 371/4242/1919. P.R.O.
67. Weekly report D.C.I. 21 July 1917. Home Political B, July 1917, Nos. 426-30. The British Foreign Office report says that the Germans were behind it and that the probable intention was to get Lenin or other anti-British Russian extremists to work for the Indian Independence Movement in Russia. Foreign Office Print 24 May 1917. F.O. 371/1220/1917. P.R.O.
68. Chattopadhyaya to Berlin Committee 30 May 1917. German Foreign Office Records, Roll No. 399. We learn, however, from the British Intelligence report that the Indians at the Conference were promised that their case would be looked into when the proper time comes. Home Political B, November 1917, Nos. 43-45. N.A.I.
69. The Bureau remained in existence upto 1921 and worked under the following names :
1. The Indian National Committee;
  2. The Universal Translation Bureau;
  3. The General Trading Bureau.
- Chattopadhyaya Papers, F. No. 236, NAI.
70. Weekly Report D.C.I. 20 October 1917. Home Political B, November 1917, Nos. 43-45. N.A.I.
- 70a. Chattopadhyaya Papers op. cit., Some of the articles and pamphlets published by the Bureau were : 1. The work for an Independent India. 2. The oppression of India by the British. 3. India's War effort. 4. Friendship between India and Japan.



5. An Indian Ultimatum. 6. What India Demands. 7. India and the World Peace—A Protest. 8. The Political Situation in India by Lala Lajpat Rai. *ibid.*
71. Indian Independence Committee to Foreign Office, 18 May 1918. German Foreign Office Records, Roll No. 400. Yusuf Ali vigorously propagated in Sweden that the members of the Indian National Committee were anarchists and they were not to be regarded as nationalists as they neither represented India nor were in touch with it. *The Indian Review*, Vol. XIX, July 1918, p. 540.
72. Weekly report D.C.I. 6 November 1917. Home Political B, November 1917, Nos. 43-45.
73. See copy of the pamphlet "Self-Government for India" in F.O. No. 37/3069/1917. P.R.O.
74. *ibid.* Chattopadhyaya to President Wilson, 5 October 1918. German Foreign Office Records, Roll No. 400. N.A.I.
75. See Chapter IX.
76. "Report on the liquidation of the Berlin Committee" dated 13 November 1918. German Foreign Office Records, Roll No. 400. N.A.I.
77. *ibid.*
78. Horst Kruger, "Germany and Early Indian Revolutionaries", *Mainstream* (New Delhi), 25 January 1964.
79. Weekly report D.C.I. 11 January 1919. Home Political B, January 1919. Nos. 160-63. N.A.I.

## From Berlin to Moscow

### Early Contacts with Russia

The revolution in Russia was hailed with joy by the Indians at home and abroad. The Ghadr Party immediately issued an appeal to the Indian revolutionaries referring to the dawn of freedom in Russia and asking them to arise! and with courage and spirit like the Russians drive out the English from India.”<sup>1</sup>

Before the Russian revolution, the Indian revolutionaries abroad had hardly any contact with the Russian revolutionaries in Europe. Shyamaji, Chattopadhyaya, Har Dayal, Acharya had met a few Russian revolutionaries when the former were fighting against the autocratic Government of the Tsar, but there is no evidence to show that they ever actively collaborated with each other. The Indian revolutionaries, no doubt, advocated the Russian methods for the overthrow of the British rule and even aligned themselves with a Russian bomb expert in Paris, Safranski, for receiving instructions in the manufacture and use of explosives with the object of bringing about a change of rule in India by acts of terrorism.<sup>2</sup> But after the Russian revolution, it was expected that Russia would adopt a friendly attitude towards the Indians who were working for liberty.

It was only on the eve of the Russian revolution that a few members of the Berlin Committee established contact with the Russians and especially with K.M. Troionovsky, who was one of the Secretaries of the Soviets at Petrograd. In Stockholm,

they associated with Troionovsky and interested him with the question of India's freedom. Impressed by the sincerity and devotion of Chattopadhyaya and Acharya, Troionovsky displayed eagerness to take up the work of propagating the demand for freedom for India in Russia. Being still under the German Foreign Office, the Indian revolutionaries informed the former about their alliance with Troionovsky and his willingness to carry on the work on their behalf and his readiness to accept money for this purpose though he was "afraid of compromising himself by having anything to do with the Germans and especially with German money."<sup>3</sup>

The basic fact which attracted the Indian revolutionaries towards new Russia was that it had proclaimed the right of the nations to self-determination and had liberated the colonial peoples of the Russian empire from the yoke of Tsarism, thereby showing to the other eastern peoples the way to national independence.<sup>4</sup> Besides this the Indian revolutionaries believed that after the creation of the People's Republic in Russia there was a strong anti-British feeling there and they were convinced that propaganda for India's freedom from that quarter would meet with success. They also hoped that if the leading men in Russia were convinced of the importance of Indian question, they would take it up as a defensive weapon against the English and "even support the Indian nationalists standpoint at the peace negotiations".

The Berlin Committee entrusted the work of propaganda to Troionovsky, who left Stockholm for Petrograd with large number of books and pamphlets given to him by Chattopadhyaya in November 1917. The Berlin Committee also requested the German Foreign Office to give Troionovsky a sum of seven thousand Krons.<sup>5</sup>

Troionovsky optimistically informed the Indian revolutionaries of the immense possibility of propaganda work in Russia and requested them to send at least one person to assist him. The Berlin Committee still working under German patronage did not view the proposal of Troionovsky with favour, perhaps they realised that due to the critical situation in Russia the "position of the Bolsheviki" was shaky and in the teeth of strong counter-revolutionary movement, they might not succeed.

Moreover, neither Chattopadhyaya nor Acharya who were running the *Propaganda Bureau, in Stockholm* was willing to leave until the re-organisation of the Party was completed which had become necessary on account of the failure of all their schemes. Perhaps what prevented them from sending a few workers to Petrograd was that they were still under the German Foreign Office who did not approve of their proposed alliance with the Russians.

The German Foreign Office after having made the initial grant for propaganda work at Petrograd, was hesitant to give any further financial help. This refusal was resented by the Berlin Committee and in a strong protest note to the German Foreign Office, they pointed out that they were independent and had no desire to "be regarded as pawns in the German game to be used only in the moment of need". It was true, they wrote that Troionovsky was an opponent of German Imperialism, but there was really no reason why he could not work for the Indian cause and in this way against England. They made it clear that they were also against every form of Imperialism "whether German or English."<sup>6</sup> They considered the policy of the German Foreign Office as "short-sighted" to withhold support in a small matter even if it did not serve the immediate interest of Germany. The German Foreign Office was requested to sanction a small amount of money for Troionovsky to carry on the propaganda work until a man could be sent to Russia or until the work was completely abandoned.<sup>7</sup> Despite the strong opposition from the German Foreign Office, the Indian revolutionaries regularly supplied propaganda material to Troionovsky and paved the way for more closer relations with the Soviet Union in future.

The connection with Troionovsky was the earliest the Indian revolutionaries had with the Russians, though it was suspected by Petrie, the Director of Criminal Intelligence, that Chattopadhyaya, while in Stockholm was also in "touch with Litvinoff and Kamenoff well-known Russian communists."<sup>8</sup>

Further link with Russia was established by Mahendra Pratap in the beginning of 1918, when on his way to Berlin from Kabul, he went to Russia and met Trotsky and Joffe who displayed much sympathy. At a public meeting in Russia

Mahendra Pratap "advocated the idea that liberated Russia should cooperate with Germany in order to liberate India."<sup>9</sup> In Berlin, Mahendra Pratap impressed upon the Berlin Committee and the German Foreign Office the necessity of forging close cooperation between Germany and Russia and taking up the Eastern question in harmony with the latter and all the Central Powers.<sup>10</sup> It appears, however, that nobody took any serious notice of his suggestion as the Committee was on the verge of dissolution.

After the dissolution of the Berlin Committee in December 1918 the Indian revolutionaries joined the Russian Propaganda Centre at Petrograd which had been functioning under Troinovskiy from August 1918.<sup>11</sup> Besides the few members of the Berlin Committee, other Indians who had joined hands with the Russian authorities for propaganda purposes at Petrograd were Hasan Shahid Suhrawardi, Abdul Jabber and Abdul Sattar,<sup>12</sup> Rikhi Kesh Latta and Dalip Singh Gill.<sup>13</sup> The Indian revolutionaries who were already associated with this centre to some extent were Chattopadhyaya, Acharya and Mahendra Pratap.<sup>14</sup>

Besides the Berlin Committee, the Indian revolutionaries in US also took the initiative and sent appeals to Trotsky and to the Workingmen and Soldiers Council of Russia in which they were reminded that "free Russia would not be unmindful of the fate of three hundred and fifty million people of India." They expected that she would "proclaim before the world that if this war is for the defence of the rights of the people, Indians should be free."<sup>15</sup>

The appeals from the Indian revolutionaries received a ready response from the Soviet authorities. This became apparent in the very first proclamation issued by the Council of People's Commissar on 24 November 1917. The proclamation appealed "to all working classes of Moslems of Russia and the East to rally to Bolshevism, to secure honest peace and to help all oppressed people to secure freedom."<sup>16</sup> Special reference was made to India which had "been oppressed during centuries by civilised despoilers of Europe". The same proclamation nullified all the treaties previously entered into by the Tsarist regime and the "Turks, Hindus, Arabs and all those whose persons

and property, freedom of fatherland had been despoiled during centuries by greedy European despoilers", were asked to "cast away those despoilers."<sup>17</sup>

By the first week of January 1918, the Soviet Government gave further indication of their interest in the fate of the Eastern people especially Indians, who were groaning under the British yoke. The Bolshevik manifesto issued on 1 January 1918 was addressed to all the peoples and Governments of Allied countries who were called upon to "take part within ten days in peace negotiations with a view to reaching a democratic settlement under which countries, India included" were to be "given the right to determine their own destinies."<sup>18</sup>

These proclamations emanating from Russia were quite disturbing for the British Government and its nervousness became evident when while forwarding them, the Secretary of State requested the Viceroy to take adequate "steps to prevent their circulation in India."<sup>19</sup> It is difficult to say how far these references to India in the Russian proclamation and manifestos were inspired by the early links of the Indian revolutionaries with the Russians. The publication of the *Blue Book* on India by the Russian Government in June 1918, with an introduction by Troionovsky was no doubt influenced by his association with the Indian revolutionaries. The Introduction gave a clear indication of the Russian policy towards India and the "role which the Russian Revolution on its side" was likely "to play in the Indian revolution, on the grounds of combating the world imperialists"<sup>20</sup>

Except for the Introduction, which the British Consul-General Mr O. Wardrop regarded "as a malicious attack on British rule in India" the *Blue Book* was merely a collection of secret documents taken from the Archives of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In his opinion the deliberate intention of the Bolsheviks in issuing the volume was to raise against the British in India, Afghanistan and elsewhere the ill-feeling of the Moslems. Troionovsky after giving a critical account of economic, social and political conditions of the Indian people under British rule, referred to the importance of India for England, the loss of which would mean a direct blow to Great Britain as an Imperialist power; it would mean

the destruction of the very principles upon which was based the British Empire. England without India was nothing. It remarked that if the importance of India for England was so immense and unlimited, the liberation of the subcontinent from the British yoke was "equally important not only from the point of view of India herself but for the sake of freeing the whole East".<sup>21</sup>

Supporting the Indian revolutionaries' programme of bringing about a successful revolution in India, it commented that

there can be no general peace without a free, independent India and there can be no social catastrophe in the West as long as the West can legally exploit the humble East and live at the expense of the latter. India is the centre of Western activity in the East. India will therefore be the first fortress of the revolution on the Eastern countries.

England was further asked to "pronounce self-determination and self-Government for India". Towards the end Troionovsky mentioned the necessity for Russia "to join hands with India in her struggle against imperialism" in order to "help her to free herself from the detested English yoke".<sup>22</sup>

After a careful analysis of the Soviet attitude towards India, based on the study of the above proclamations and the *Blue Book*, the Director of Criminal Intelligence summed up his opinion saying that the Bolsheviki were convinced that in the British Empire, most vulnerable point was India and they cherished it as an article of faith that till India was liberated Russia would not be rid of the menace of England. By the end of 1918 the Russian wireless announced officially the forthcoming inauguration of an Academy for the practical study of oriental languages and stated that besides the teaching of such languages, the Academy would prepare capable people to operate in oriental countries including India.<sup>23</sup>

However, in 1917-18, except for these proclamations and the publication of the *Blue Book*, no further steps were taken by the Russian Government for the advancement of the Indian freedom movement. This, however, does not mean that these

declarations by the Soviet authorities were without their effects. According to Petrie's opinion these "declarations made India's position as a factor of international discussion." The same offices even submitted to the British Foreign Office that in the long run revolutionary and New Russia would find it to be of great advantage to her to have "a free and self-governing India from the political and economic point of view", and it was "natural that the Indian people" might get "sympathy in their work of regeneration of India from Russia."<sup>24</sup>

Besides, the most plausible reason which prevented the Russian authorities during 1917-18 from deciding on any line of action with regard to India or the Indian revolutionaries was that they were busy with their own internal difficulties.<sup>25</sup>

No doubt, after the Russian Revolution, the leading Bolsheviks devoted all their energies on Europe where communist revolutions were anticipated to be just round the corner.<sup>26</sup> But towards the end of 1911, the Government of India received information from their Intelligence Agent in London that he overheard in a discussion by two Russians that a "Bolshevik plan for encouraging a rising in India" was being contemplated by the Soviet authorities. He even stated the names of the four persons, i.e., 1. Tzanrinoff, 2. Zalkind, 3. Shekin, 4. Valodursky, connected with the plan of the rising in India and of these four two were stated to be already in Simla and the last two on their way to India via Afghanistan.<sup>27</sup> The Government of India did not take any serious notice of this report, but by the beginning of 1919, when the situation changed in Russia and the Bolshevik leaders directed their attention seriously towards India by "initiating a specially vigorous movement in favour of revolution there", that the authorities in India became aware of danger from that quarter. We learn from the report of the General Staff Branch that Soviet authorities expanded the Indian section of the Ministry of Propaganda at Moscow with the help of the Indian revolutionaries. The main object then was to achieve the victory of socialism in the East by a vigorous propaganda. Turkestan was selected for obvious advantage as the main base for Bolshevik Oriental Campaign and a special mission under Bravine, who was formerly on the Russian Consular Staff in



Calcutta was posted in Tashkent. Bravine was given full powers to spend large sums of money for propaganda and a mass of socialist literature was placed at his disposal.<sup>28</sup>

Bolshevism in the eyes of the British bureaucracy was a practical creed, the essence of which was the attainment of absolute communism after a violent reversal of the structure of the existing society. Its aim was to create a social revolution and to uplift the lowest stratum of society to a position of absolute mastery. The authorities in India were, therefore, apprehensive in view of the mounting social and political unrest in the country that Bolshevism opened a convenient door to its propaganda which despite their best efforts could not entirely be excluded from a country of the size of India.<sup>29</sup>

The political situation in India at the beginning of 1919 was quite critical and offered a very favourable opportunity for the success of the Bolshevik propaganda. During the war a change had come over the spirit of India, the like of which no man had seen before. There had been an immense quickening of life among the politically conscious classes, accompanied by the birth of a new spirit.<sup>30</sup> The majority of the people cooperated with the British Government during the war in the vain hope of realising their political aspirations. The gradual spreading of the anti-British propaganda carried on by the Indian revolutionaries with the assistance of the Bolsheviks was slowly beginning to have effect on the Indian political situation and alongwith other factors gave a fillip to the demand for self-government. This change in the political outlook of the people was brought to the notice of the British Foreign Office by the Director of Criminal Intelligence who wrote: "We must not forget that in case Great Britain completely ignores the rightful demands of the Indian people to be self-governing", then the Indian people might follow the example of Russia and overthrow the British Government in India. In his view there was an idealistic element in the present moment in Russia and it

**can safely be asserted that it breathes quite similar spirit as that of the French Revolution, which tried to assert its spirit in all Europe and has left its mark in all the**

•  
**European countries at large.**

**The Russian demand regarding the right of the people to choose their government is quite revolutionary, and it is very interesting that the Russian papers and leaders in majority are cynically attacking Great Britain for her profession of the cause of justice for small nations. They have pointed out in writing with uncompromising attitude that to be just, Great Britain must also administer justice and liberty to the people of Egypt and India.<sup>31</sup>**

Instead of paying heed to these warnings, the Government of India resorted to more repressive measures and published the Rowlatt Report in April 1918. An announcement was also made for the introduction of two Bills in the next session of the Imperial Legislature on the basis of its recommendations. The Bills invested the authorities with power to arrest or imprison without trial any person suspected of sedition. These Bills "came as a shock to the people"<sup>32</sup> and were vehemently opposed by them. A wave of political agitation swept all over the country. The Government of India paid no heed to the agitation and tried to crush it ruthlessly, when General Dyer massacred hundreds of unarmed people at Jallianwalla Bagh, Amritsar. To appease the public an Enquiry Committee was appointed to investigate into the disturbances. The authorities were convinced that the outbreak in the Punjab during early 1919 was part of a pre-arranged conspiracy to overthrow the British Government in India by force by the Indian revolutionaries abroad. The evidence placed before the Committee tried to show that the disturbances were brought about by the alliance of the Indians with the Bolsheviks. A report from *Daily Mail* dated 20 March 1919 was quoted by the Government's spokesman to the effect that a Bolshevik diplomatic agent was in touch with Bombay *via* London and had arranged for sending sums upto £25,000 for the purchase of explosives. The reply received from Bombay indicated that a Bolshevik movement would break out in that country without fail in March or April.<sup>33</sup> The Committee was further sounded about the Bolshevik Propaganda Bureau in Moscow composed of members of the Indian Nationalist Party who had escaped

from Berlin after the armistice with the avowed intention of causing a revolution in India.<sup>34</sup> The Committee, however, did not accept this evidence as conclusive and doubted its authenticity. They concluded that there was nothing to show that the outbreak in the Punjab was a part of a pre-arranged conspiracy to overthrow the British Government in India. Later on, even the Director, Criminal Intelligence admitted that the Punjab Disturbances in 1919 were strictly indigenous in their origin and were supported neither by foreign direction nor by foreign money.<sup>35</sup> But the Government of India nevertheless kept thinking that the events were inspired by the Bolsheviks propaganda and the Indian revolutionaries from abroad. This belief of theirs was further confirmed when the Amir of Afghanistan started hostilities against the British in early May 1919.

### **Third Afghan War and the Provisional Government of India**

From its very inception in December 1915, the members of the Provisional Government of India had desperately tried to instigate the Amir to declare war against England, but all their efforts proved to be futile so long as Amir Habibullah occupied the throne. In February 1919, an event occurred in Kabul, which proved to be of great importance for the Provisional Government. This was the assassination of Habibullah Khan, who had always "been favourably disposed towards the British."<sup>36</sup> His successor, Amir Amanullah Khan, however, had no such amicable feelings towards the British. Like any other Asian country, Afghanistan was equally affected by the rise of nationalism which came in the wake of the Great War and the new Amir rightly thought of achieving freedom from British tutelage. In his first communication to the Government of India on 3 March 1919, while narrating the events preceding his accession to the throne, Amanullah indicated to Chelmsford that the independent and free Government of Afghanistan was ready to enter into any friendly relations with the British. The Government of India, taken by surprise by the above letter, was now face to face with the question of accepting this *fait accompli* or not. The wavering attitude of the British and the encouragement which the Amir received from

various sources inspired him to uphold the independence of Afghanistan by declaring War against the British Government in India.<sup>37</sup> In this ambition, the Amir got encouragement both from Mahmud Tarzi, a professional journalist and Foreign Minister of Afghanistan, who brought Afghanistan into contact with European civilisation, and the members of the Provisional Government of India. The reports of a political crisis in India in early 1919 further prompted the Amir to achieve his objective.

Sir Michael O'Dwyer, the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab believed that the Amir

whether incited by messages from Indian extremists or (there can be little doubt that a section of the Indian extremists kept in close touch with the Indian revolutionary organisation headed by Mahendra Pratap, Obedullah, Barkatullah and other organisers of the Silk-letters Conspiracy of 1917), he was encouraged in his hostile action by the news of the disturbances in the Panjab.<sup>38</sup>

Not only that, Sir Michael suspected that the Afghan aggression was "doubtless timed to fit in with the internal situation in India". There is no doubt that the Amir was inspired to take advantage of the critical situation in India by the Indian revolutionaries in Kabul. To support the Amir's action, the Provisional Government issued a proclamation declaring that it had entered into a compact with the invading forces, and the people were asked not to destroy their real interest by fighting against them.

On 13 April 1919, at a special durbar, the Amir proclaimed that Afghanistan "should be externally and internally independent and free."<sup>39</sup> At the same time the Amir ordered his forces to take their position on the Indian frontier "to take advantage of the disturbances in India, should these develop into an open rebellion." It is generally held that no formal declaration of war was made but the Commander-in-Chief apparently exceeded his instructions and precipitated hostilities which resulted in war.<sup>40</sup>

The war, however, was between two unequal powers. The

British superiority in warfare and especially their command of the air compelled the Afghan Commander-in-Chief to request for cessation of hostilities only after eleven days of the war. The war was over in a month's time and in August 1919, the two parties signed a treaty at Rawalpindi whereby the British recognized the independence of Afghanistan and stopped the subsidy which the Amir used to receive.

As a result of this short war, Afghanistan achieved independence, but the war did not prove useful from the point of view of the Indian revolutionaries. In spite of the proclamations issued by the Provisional Government and even by the Amir that he was coming to free the people of India "from the clutches of the tyranny of the British", there was hardly any response inside the country. The leadership of the nationalists movement had passed into the hands of Mahatma Gandhi, who said at the time of Afghan invasion that "I would rather see India perish at the hands of the Afghans than purchase freedom from Afghan invasion at the cost of her honour."<sup>11</sup> As regards the help given by Soviet authorities either to the Indian revolutionaries or the Amir there is no concrete evidence. The Bolsheviks could hardly afford any financial or military aid to the Afghans even if they had so desired as they were "too desperately engaged in their own defence against Allied intervention and internal counter-revolution."<sup>12</sup> But the moral support of a powerful neighbour like Russia was enough encouragement for the Afghans in their war of independence.

### **The Suritz Mission and the Russian Policy Towards India**

Even though the Indian revolutionaries could not achieve any success during the Third Afghan War, they again turned towards Russia. In a secret meeting in May 1919 held in Berlin, the Indian revolutionaries reviewed the whole situation and after considering the request from Chattopadhyaya "in Stockholm and Barkatullah in Moscow,"<sup>13</sup> decided to send few more of their representatives at both the places in order to increase their propaganda for the freedom of India. With their links now snapped with Germany, and the British manoeuvring with the Swedish Government having made their stay in Stockholm quite difficult, it was sheer force of

circumstances which compelled them to strengthen their relations with Russia. Accordingly, Mahendra Pratap and Acharya were sent to work with Barkatullah in Moscow where he had been negotiating with the Soviet authorities for assistance with a view to bring about a rising in India.<sup>44</sup>

By the beginning of 1919 Moscow had become a Mecca for the revolutionaries from all over the world who were attracted towards Bolshevik ideas. But for the Indian revolutionaries, the Bolshevik ideology had perhaps no attraction. Only the helpful and human attitude of the Soviet authorities towards oppressed nationalities was more tempting and which at that point of time was more important. Barkatullah in an interview with the *Izvestia* had explained the point of view of the Indian revolutionaries, which was that they were neither "socialists nor communists". Their political programme was the expulsion of the English from Asia and the help of Soviet Russia was needed to achieve this.<sup>45</sup> This aim of the Indians was somewhat in tune with that of the Soviet authorities' own policy in Asia. Summing up the Soviet policy, the Intelligence Officer attached to the India Office wrote that Great Britain, in the opinion of the Soviet Union formed the main barrier to the emancipation of the world and to the institution of a universal Soviet regime. As such it should be destroyed. This could be done by detaching India from the Empire. As India could not be taken by a direct assault, it was necessary, as a preliminary step to create Soviet right upto the Indian borders and by intensive propaganda in India itself to create an internal situation that might weaken the Imperial might.<sup>46</sup>

The most convenient place from the point of view of the Soviet authorities to achieve this objective was Afghanistan. Afghanistan was equally willing to have friendly relations with Soviet Russia, and after it became independent, the Amir sent Muhammad Wali Khan as an envoy to Bukhara, but with the ultimate aim of establishing diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union.<sup>47</sup>

The Soviet authorities similarly sent N.Z. Bravine as an official representative to Kabul from Tashkent. Bravine reached Kabul in September 1919 and by the middle of November, a preliminary understanding had been sketched out

under which the Bolsheviks were to offer to Afghanistan a strip of territory north of the Herat together with money, arms and ammunition and technical instructions in return for an understanding from Afghanistan to facilitate the despatch of Bolshevik arms, emissaries and propaganda material to the Indian frontier Tribes and India.<sup>48</sup> The Amir no doubt willing to cultivate friendly relations with the Russians was hesitant to accept Bravine's "suggestion to send anti-British agents to India."<sup>49</sup> After having failed in his mission, Bravine started strengthening the Oriental Propaganda Bureau in Turkistan, for which he had already recruited a few Mohammadans. Bravine appointed Abdul Subhan and Abdul Rehman as his agents in Kabul for recruiting more persons.<sup>50</sup> These recruits were sent to Tashkent to work for the Indian revolutionary press there<sup>51</sup> and to carry on the anti-British propaganda. The report of the General Staff Branch gives us the information that the Tashkent Bureau was making every effort to increase the output and circulation of the literature which was noticeable for its virulent anti-British tone.<sup>52</sup>

However, before Bravine<sup>53</sup> could achieve anything worthwhile from his negotiations with either the Amir or the Indians he was succeeded by Z. Suritz as Soviet representative in Kabul.

Suritz came to Kabul accompanied by a few prominent Indian revolutionaries. In Moscow, they had a meeting with Lenin, which was attended by Barkatullah, Abdul Rab, Acharya, Mahendra Pratap and Ibrahim. As a result of this meeting Mahendra Pratap mentions that Lenin's Government practically compelled them to go with their Ambassador Suritz<sup>54</sup> to Kabul. While in Moscow Mahendra Pratap requested the Soviet authorities to recognise him as the President of the Provisional Government of India which he had established in Kabul.<sup>55</sup>

The Suritz mission accompanied by Mahendra Pratap, Acharya and Abdul Rab reached Kabul on 26 December 1919. The mission brought with it a mass of propaganda material for its onward transmission to India.<sup>56</sup> But from the moment of its arrival differences arose between the various groups regarding the methods to be adopted for the propaganda

against the British. Discussions were held between the Indian revolutionaries, the members of the Suritz mission and a few Afghan politicians. Abdul Rab and Acharya were willing to follow the Bolshevik method of propaganda, while Mahendra Pratap and the others wanted to stick to the old policy of the Provisional Government of India. The main point of difference was whether to propagate the Bolshevik ideas or the nationalist aims. In this rift Suritz supported Abdul Rab and Acharya as he had instructions from Moscow "to introduce a new change into the old party" which could follow the Bolshevik principles. The Amir who was carrying on the peace negotiations with the British put an end to this controversy by siding with Mahendra Pratap and his party. The Amir was not willing to allow any parties in Afghanistan "to take any steps against the English."<sup>57</sup>

As a result of these differences, Abdul Rab and Acharya with the backing of Suritz formed a separate party known as *Inquilabin-i-Hind* (The Indian Revolutionary Association). Enrolment forms were issued for the purpose of enlisting more persons willing to join the society. The creation of the separate Association, however, did not improve the atmosphere of friction among the Indians. As a last resort Suritz insisted on appointing one leader to carry on the Bolshevik propaganda. Tired of these intrigues, the Amir ordered Abdul Rab, Acharya and his party to leave Kabul.

Suritz, however, continued his efforts to come to an agreement with the Amir. In his negotiations, Suritz impressed upon the Amir to allow "free passage for Bolshevik agents and literature through Afghanistan and establishment of Bolshevik press" and also a guarantee for "the transport of arms for frontier tribes."<sup>58</sup> The Amir was reluctant to agree to these proposals since Mahmud Tarzi, the Afghan Foreign Minister, was already in Mussoorie trying to figure out the details of the Treaty with the British. This "considerably reduced Bolshevik hopes of using Afghanistan as a corridor to revolutionary India". Since there was no possibility of coming to an agreement with the Afghans Suritz started "entering into secret negotiations with the Muhajarins, offering to enlist such,"<sup>59</sup> who were fit to carry on Bolshevik propaganda and to fight against the British in India. The opportunity had been afforded by



the Hijarat movement,<sup>60</sup> which was viewed rather optimistically by the Soviet authorities as a sure "sign that revolution in India was imminent."<sup>61</sup> Full advantage was taken of this movement and after recruiting a number of *Muhajars*, Suritz sent them to Tashkent, for training under the Indian Revolutionary Society of Abdur Rab and Acharya.

The Government of India had watched with apprehension the activities of the Suritz mission in Kabul, and then the reports regarding the exploitation of the *Hijarat* movement by the Bolsheviks further increased their fears about the designs of the Soviet authorities. They were convinced that the Bolshevik intrigues in Afghanistan were definitely directed towards the spreading of Bolshevik ideas in India and the establishment of friendly relations with Afghanistan.<sup>62</sup>

To add further to the anxieties of the Government of India the Soviet authorities convened the Oriental Congress at Baku on 1 September 1920.<sup>63</sup> The Congress was "represented by twenty Asian nationalities including those of Turkey, China, India, Persia and Afghanistan."<sup>64</sup> The ostensible object of the Congress was "to promote the spread of Bolshevism in the East" and to "concert plans to cause trouble, and unrest in India."<sup>65</sup> Seven Indians<sup>66</sup> from the Indian Revolutionary Committee (party), Tashkent, attended the Congress as representatives of India. As regards India and Afghanistan the representatives came to the conclusion that the future Bolshevik activities in those countries would come under the direct control of the Eastern Section of the Third International, and while considering the political situation in India they remarked that "it would be suicidal not to profit by the present God-send opportunity."<sup>67</sup> Speeches were delivered by Zinoveff, Karl Radek and Anthony Quelch. The Indian delegates also spoke at different meetings which were arranged at the "*Rabachi* (Workers) Club". In one of the speeches Abdul Kadir spoke that the Indian people were now ready to throw in their lot with Soviet Russia. He was highly emotional and suddenly turning to the map of India—which was hanging just behind, he burst into tears and spoke no longer. According to the report of the British Intelligence Agent "he

hastily returned from the stage and the interpreter explained to the audience that "Kadir wept for his country". This caused a great uproar amongst the workingmen. "Free India! Free India", "Long live the Indian people", "Down with British" were the exclamations one could hear as the meeting broke up.<sup>68</sup>

The Government of India viewed the Baku Congress as a complete farce and was convinced after receiving the reports from their agents, that the Russian Government was against undertaking "any active constructive work in India at present" as the latter believed that a powerful revolutionary movement existed in that country, which "must take its inevitable course."<sup>69</sup>

It is commonly believed that the Russians organised the Baku Conference to demonstrate their capacity for creating trouble for Britain by instigating the Eastern people in case the latter was not willing to resume diplomatic relations with the former. Whether the Baku Congress served the Soviet purpose of putting pressure on Britain for the resumption of diplomatic relations,<sup>70</sup> it is difficult to say but the Conference did infuse a new light amongst the oppressed people of the East and taught them that cooperation was possible.

Immediately after the Baku Conference, the Soviet authorities thought of giving shape to the second decision (the expansion of the Asiatic Bureau at Tashkent and the opening of the military-training school) of the Second World Congress for which they selected M.N. Roy, who had come from Mexico in early 1920 as a Communist delegate to attend the Congress.<sup>71</sup> His stature rose high after his performance in the Congress and he came to be regarded by the Soviet authorities as an expert on Indian affairs in the Comintern. While in Moscow Roy advocated the immediate formation of an Indian Communist group to work with the British Communist party for organising revolution amongst working masses throughout the British Empire.<sup>72</sup> The British Intelligence agent's report says that Lenin had the greatest confidence in Roy and he attributed this influence to Roy's capabilities. In his view Roy understood his subject very well. By subject he meant the subject of propaganda or the conditions of India—the idea of uplifting

in a political sense. Though the differences in the thinking of Lenin and Roy became apparent when discussion took place on the colonial question at the meeting of the Second Congress, yet Roy was the only delegate who could speak with some force about the question regarding the liberation movement in India.<sup>74</sup>

Soon after the Second Congress, Roy was asked to proceed to Tashkent to organise the Central Asiatic Bureau and to re-shape the affairs of the Indian Revolutionary Association. But before his departure for Tashkent, Roy, it is commonly believed, got the approval from them regarding his scheme for the invasion of India through Afghanistan.

He persuaded the Soviet authorities to provide large quantity of arms and ammunition to be sent to the Indian frontier through Afghanistan,<sup>74</sup> where he wanted to raise an army of liberation for India. His plan was to raise, equip and train such an army in Afghanistan using the frontier territories as the base of operation, and with the necessary support of the tribesmen, the liberation army was to march into India.<sup>75</sup> Roy did not attend the Baku Congress but sent Abani Mukerjee (1891-1937). He went direct to Tashkent where he reached near about 20 August 1920.<sup>76</sup>

While in Moscow, Roy had been able to form an All-India Central Revolutionary Committee and under the "General Plan and Programme of Work (for the preparation) of an Indian Revolution", which he completed, it was envisaged to convene, as soon as possible, an all-India Congress of revolutionaries comprising representatives of all revolutionary parties and factions to guide the entire political work amongst Indians in and outside India. But Roy and his group, while drawing up the above programme ignored completely not only the Indian revolutionaries in Germany, Stockholm and United States but also the Indian Revolutionary Association which was already in existence in Tashkent since July 1, 1920. Naturally when on his arrival in Tashkent, Roy confronted the Indian Revolutionary Association with the *fait accompli* of his above plan, he encountered opposition from both Abdul Rab and Acharya. At the two meetings, leaders of the Indian Revolutionary Association vigorously protested against the one party composition

of the Committee and demanded that their representatives be included in it.<sup>77</sup> Roy had differences with both Abdul Rab and Acharya. Roy's intention was to subordinate the Indian Revolutionary Association to the Committee. He had come invested with full powers and control of the expenditure and was keen to reorganise the affairs according to his own way. Abdul Rab and Acharya, though they had embraced Communism, did not wish to associate themselves with any "Soviet school of propaganda". Their idea was to work for Indian freedom independently and they wanted to preserve its organisational and political independence. Ignoring the opposition of the Indian Revolutionary Association,<sup>78</sup> Roy proceeded in his own way to re-shape the affairs at Tashkent and a propaganda and military training centre started functioning under his guidance. The military training school was meant for training of the officers who were to take charge of the Indian troops to be recruited later on for the freedom of India.<sup>79</sup> The young recruits at the propaganda school were to undergo a scientific training under well-experienced men. No doubt the lectures were mainly confined to the explanation of the intricacies of communism and its relevance for the Eastern countries, yet the organisers did not ignore the importance of religion, and emphasis was laid on the religious teachings, especially of Islam and the Vedas. They were reminded of their ancient glory and knowledge.<sup>80</sup> Roy then turned his attention to Kabul, where Suritz was still negotiating with the Amir for a Treaty of Friendship. Suritz had the information from Moscow that Roy, the Indian Communist, who was at Tashkent would be paying a visit to Kabul. Suritz was anxious that the military training school at Tashkent should be "removed to Kabul as soon as the treaty with the Afghans" was ratified because in his view unless close contacts were established with India itself, and the frontier tribes, good work was impossible.<sup>81</sup>

In order to strengthen the hands of Roy for the implementation of the scheme for the invasion of India through Afghanistan, the Soviet authorities sent Jamal Pasha and Barkatullah to Kabul in October 1920.<sup>82</sup> Roy after reaching the Afghan frontier started negotiations for his entry and for the transport

of arms and ammunition through Afghanistan : both of which were refused.<sup>83</sup> On further pressure from the Soviet Government, the Amir agreed to allow the arms and ammunition to pass provided

**they were allowed the responsibility of transport and distribution; which suggestion the Soviet approved, on condition that the arms and ammunition were to be handed over, on the Indian frontier, to persons selected by the Soviet Government. The Afghan Government refused this condition, so the consignment remained in Russian territory.<sup>84</sup>**

The main reason for this attitude of the Amir was that though he was eager to maintain close relations with Soviet Russia, he was, however, equally determined to preserve the independence of his country which he realised could only be safeguarded by maintaining a neutral position.<sup>85</sup>

The scheme drawn up by Roy had no foundation and it is very doubtful whether any responsible Soviet leader in 1920 except perhaps Trotsky "seriously toyed with the idea of liberating India from British rule by armed action."<sup>86</sup> With the failure of the scheme, Roy again turned towards the affairs at Tashkent and made a protest to the Soviet authorities in Turkestan against the rendering by them of direct assistance to the Indian Revolutionary Association and wanted that in future contacts with the Association and other Indian elements should be maintained only through the Committee. Persits holds that the Communist International did try to ease the conflict, but the ideological differences were so strong between the two groups that its pleadings could not bring about any conciliation between them. On October 17, 1920 at a meeting Roy announced the formation of the Communist Party of India superseding the All India Revolutionary Committee, which even eclipsed the Indian Revolutionary Association by detaching Acharya from it.<sup>87</sup>

At Kabul Suritz mission succeeded with the Amir and signed a Treaty of Friendship on 28 February 1921. While encouraging Roy in his schemes, the Soviet authorities did not ignore the Indian revolutionaries with whom negotiations were still proceeding steadily since the time Suritz by backing Abdul Rab

and Acharya, had antagonised the former at Kabul. The Soviet authorities decided to hold a general conference of all the Indian revolutionaries in Europe<sup>88</sup> and an invitation was sent to Roy to attend and to collaborate with his former colleagues. The Indian revolutionaries still had faith in Soviet intentions to help them in their fight against Britain, but perhaps they had no information about the activities of Roy at Tashkent and Moscow since the time they met him in Berlin on his way to attend the Second Congress of the Comintern.

### **Indian Revolutionaries in Moscow**

Ever since Suritz sided with Abdul Rab and Acharya, the other Indian revolutionaries on the continent refrained from entering into any further negotiations with the Soviet authorities and did not take any part in the Propaganda Centre at Tashkent. Barkatullah from Moscow tried to patch up the differences and informed Chattopadhyaya that it was desirable that he and Har Dayal and other Indians in Europe should get into touch with Soviet representatives in different places for further talks as regards their object of overthrowing the British Government in India with Soviet help.<sup>89</sup>

The Indian revolutionaries abroad were now divided into three main groups: those belonging to the late Berlin Committee were scattered in Stockholm and Berlin;<sup>90</sup> the Ghadr Party was working under Bhagwan Singh, and a new society, the Friends of Freedom for India in America was organised under Tarak Nath Das. But all the "three groups were in close communication with each other."<sup>91</sup> Chattopadhyaya was anxious to bring all the three groups together as he had formulated a new plan for bringing about a revolution in India with the help of the Soviet Government.<sup>92</sup> The Government of India attached no importance to the schemes of Chattopadhyaya and regarded the Indian revolutionaries as "quite unpractical enough to build hope of a revolution"<sup>93</sup> with the help of Russia. The Indian revolutionaries mainly relying upon the encouragement which their representatives had earlier received in Moscow and Kabul and the proclamations which the Soviet Government had issued for the liberation of the oppressed

people of the world had fallen under the influence of Bolshevik ideas. The Berlin group, Chattopadhyaya in Stockholm and Biren Das Gupta in Switzerland, all earnestly wished to collaborate with Moscow while the Ghadr Party was also in the process of falling into line with the Indian revolutionaries in Europe.<sup>94</sup>

This inclination towards Moscow was, however, not the "result of genuine conversion to Lenin's theories" but was in fact, the outcome of their "desire to obtain financial support and active assistance from Russia. Perhaps, after having seen this trend amongst the Indian revolutionaries, the Russian Government was also not too serious to scrutinise "too closely the real beliefs of the Indians", and "their ability to give trouble to England was their best credentials for admittance into the fold"<sup>95</sup> of the Bolsheviks.

The problem before the Indian revolutionaries during 1920 was to organise themselves into one group. They decided to form a kind of Central Executive Committee composed of really trustworthy people and then to negotiate with the Soviet Government for help. This was necessary as the Soviet Government wanted that "a representative meeting of Indians should be held in Berlin to discuss their future plan of campaign,"<sup>96</sup> and they were also keen to discuss the plans with Chattopadhyaya. During 1920 the Soviet authorities had often invited him to Russia, but every time he declined the invitation because of the fact that he was the acknowledged leader of the Indian revolutionaries in Europe and was anxious that all matters regarding Indian propaganda should be referred to him and not to Abdul Rab, Acharya and Roy as the Soviet Government had been doing. Russian comrades like Litvinoff and Kamenoff supported the claim of Chattopadhyaya, and while returning from England they had suggested to organise his party in "such a way that the Soviet could deal with him direct in all matters."<sup>97</sup>

Encouraged by the Russian comrades Chattopadhyaya collected majority of the Indian revolutionaries in Berlin and after a series of meetings it was decided to form a society known as the "Indian Revolutionary Society". The members of the Executive Committee were to be divided into three groups :

(a) Political, (b) Commercial, (c) Propagandist. The head of the Political section was required to remain in close touch with the Soviet authorities.<sup>98</sup> The society was to have branches in different countries, each with its own head who should be a member of the Central Executive Committee.<sup>99</sup>

The object was to unite the various groups working for the emancipation of India in different parts of the world.<sup>100</sup> A Central Executive Committee consisting of Chattopadhyaya, Datta, Abdul Wahid, Gupta, Khankhoje was formed and authorised to negotiate with the Soviet authorities for financial help. It was also reported that Chattopadhyaya was thinking of starting a paper *The Indian Communist* with the help of Bolshevik money.<sup>101</sup> In pursuance of this aim Chattopadhyaya went to Moscow towards the end of 1920, where he met Lenin.<sup>102</sup>

These developments were also reported to the Indian revolutionaries in Kabul through the medium of the Soviet Government and they were asked to send a representative to Moscow to assist Chattopadhyaya. Accordingly Salim came from Kabul and he met Chicherin and other important Soviet officials. The Soviet policy of "exploiting pan-Islamic feelings against Great Britain in India and Egypt", was not approved and while in Moscow the Indian revolutionaries impressed upon the Soviet authorities the necessity of dropping the pan-Islamic propaganda as it was likely to lead to Hindu-Muslim antagonism which in turn would be fatal to India. They advocated that only nationalism was to be preached and when once India was independent, "communism could be introduced later."<sup>103</sup> The Indian revolutionaries made a request to the Soviet authorities "for arming the frontier tribes, and for obtaining permission from the Afghan Government for munitions to be carried through Afghan territory to the Indian frontier."<sup>104</sup> As a result of these discussions the Soviet authorities agreed to send their representative to Berlin to examine the whole scheme after Chattopadhyaya had been able to form the Indian revolutionaries into one united party. By the beginning of 1921, Chattopadhyaya came back to Berlin and Salim went to Kabul.

Immediately after his arrival Chattopadhyaya started collecting all the Indian revolutionaries at one place with a view to presenting a united front. Hardly had he begun with the



work when in the third week of February, a telegram was received from Moscow requesting Chattopadhyaya to bring the representatives of all the organised Indian bodies to Moscow in order to meet the Afghan and Russian representatives. Chattopadhyaya not being prepared, replied that a delay might be allowed till April "so as to give him time to collect all the leaders he required from Europe and America."<sup>105</sup>

The task of bringing together all the Indian revolutionaries at one place was not easy. Chattopadhyaya, however, managed to contact Indians in England, France, and America. Madame Cama was also requested to join the party in Berlin but she had been invalid for a long time and could not come. The Friends of Freedom for India Society from America sent Agnes Smedley as their representative. By March 1921, Chattopadhyaya had successfully carried out his plan for linking up revolutionary groups in Europe. He then approached the Soviet authorities for financial help. They sent an agent to Berlin to test Chattopadhyaya's "statement that his society represented Indian opinion."<sup>106</sup>

After critically examining the scheme of the Indian revolutionaries, the Soviet Agent demanded a mandate "signed by well-known Indian leaders such as Gandhi". It was not easy for Chattopadhyaya to produce a mandate of the kind desired by the Soviet representative and he argued that if they could believe Roy, who had also no mandate from any Indian "why should you not believe us—a Society." After further discussions, the Soviet Agent was satisfied and returned to Moscow.<sup>107</sup>

Roy, who was in Tashkent, as mentioned earlier, had been invited to Moscow to take part in the discussions with the Indian revolutionaries. While in Moscow, Roy had advised the authorities that Chattopadhyaya's group represented a Nationalist Party and not a Communist party and it was against communist principles to help nationalists. The report of a British agent tells us that at this time Roy was in the confidence of Lenin and was acting as the chief of the revolutionary commission in the East which meant that he was in charge of the revolutionary propaganda to be carried on in India and was to be reorganised from Tashkent. The same report further says that the primary object of Roy was not only the freedom

of India but the revolutionising of India and making it communist as he was a strong communist himself. In a talk with Quelch, Roy gave him to understand that there were hopes of communism being established at least in Bengal if nowhere else. Roy based this statement on the ground that Bengal was the brain of India and religious differences which were prominent in other parts of India were less apparent in Bengal.<sup>108</sup>

Roy who had become more popular as the founder of the Communist Party of India at Tashkent, sent a word to the Indian revolutionaries in Berlin offering his cooperation, provided they were willing to strictly adhere "to communism and acceptance of Roy as a leader."<sup>109</sup> These conditions were not acceptable to the Indian revolutionaries. Further negotiations with the Soviet authorities resulted in their acceptance of Chattopadhyaya's protest against their pan-Islamic policy and they even agreed to drop the idea of immediate communist propaganda in India and to support unconditionally any revolutionary Indian movement.<sup>110</sup>

All these negotiations between the Indian revolutionaries and the Soviet authorities were going on when the latter were conducting their Trade Agreement with Britain, which was ultimately signed on 16 March 1921. It was while still under the shadow of this agreement, that they decided to invite the Indian revolutionaries in Moscow. After a prolonged discussion in Berlin between the Soviet representative and Chattopadhyaya "a working agreement was reached between the various parties and an invitation from the Soviet Government and the Third International" to come to Moscow was given to the Indian revolutionaries. They were informed to attend a meeting in Moscow on 25 May 1921, which was to decide the "best method for inaugurating and launching a revolution in India."<sup>111</sup>

Chattopadhyaya went to Moscow accompanied by other representatives<sup>112</sup> to attend the meeting, while Roy and his group were already there. It became quite apparent after a short while that neither Roy nor Chattopadhyaya was willing to work together. Roy, who had the patronage of the Soviet leaders had already signed a contract with them "under which he had agreed to accept Bolshevism as the only possible

organisation that could be introduced in the 'New India' and had pledged himself to further the cause of Bolshevism, not only in India, but throughout the world."<sup>113</sup>

The conference of the Indian revolutionaries held under these circumstances was not very successful. Dispute arose between Roy and Chattopadhyaya for leadership. Roy claimed the leadership on the ground that, whatever he might have failed to do, he had won a great victory for Indian revolutionaries by obtaining from the Third International recognition for the Indian Communist Party formed at Tashkent,<sup>114</sup> while Chattopadhyaya justifiably claimed to be the leader of the Indian revolutionaries in Europe and America, who had been fighting for Indian independence for the past fifteen years.

After the Trade Agreement with Great Britain, the Soviet Government was hesitant to have any open dealings with the Indian revolutionaries on account of the repeated protests<sup>115</sup> which they were receiving from the British Government. With the Communist Party of India as represented by Roy already recognized by the Third International, the Soviet Government decided to favour Roy rather than the Indian revolutionaries. Eventually, they unconditionally accepted Roy's group as the one with which the Third International would work in future and it was also decided to start propaganda in India for which they undertook to provide ample funds.<sup>116</sup>

Chattopadhyaya even presented a "thesis in dissent—saying that the first necessity was the overthrow of the British Government in India, after which Communism could be introduced."<sup>117</sup> This is confirmed by B.N. Datta's account who writes that

**Chattopadhyaya propagated his view that in India's present condition a working-class and communist movement was not possible, and what was necessary was assistance to the revolutionary movement for the expulsion of the British. Chattopadhyaya's thesis was that the first priority should be given to the task of overthrowing the British Empire and for that purpose the Third International should form a revolutionary board to help revolutionary work in India.<sup>118</sup>**

This decision of the Soviet authorities to favour the

Communist Party of Roy, gave a great setback to the Indian revolutionary movement abroad, but at the same time it gave a new dimension to their conception of the struggle against the British. The Indian revolutionaries departed by the middle of September 1921 from Moscow.

### References

1. US Department of Justice Records, Roll No. 3. N.A I.
2. K.C. Ker, op. cit., p. 144. It is also on record that Lenin was in Paris during 1907-08, and was present at the International Socialist Congress at Stuttgart which was attended by Madame Cama and S R. Rana, but there is authentic proof whether he met the Indian revolutionaries. Madame Cama, however, referred to the Russian comrades present there in her speech. In particular she said "our peoples cannot send their delegation to you, because they are poor. But I believe that the day will come when they awake and follow the example of our comrades from Russia to whom particularly we send our fraternal greetings". Quoted in Anand Gupta (ed.), op. cit., p. 89.
3. Berlin Committee to German Foreign Office, 1 November 1917. German Foreign Office Records, Roll No. 400. N.A I.
4. M. Persits, "Transition of Indian Revolutionaries to Marxism-Leninism", *Soviet Review*, Vol. XI, 16 May 1974, p. 25.
5. Berlin Committee to German Foreign Office, 1 November 1917. German Foreign Office Records, Roll No. 400. N.A.I.
6. Berlin Committee to German Foreign Office, 1 November 1917. German Foreign Office Records, Roll. No. 400. N.A I.
7. *ibid.*
8. D. Petrie, *Communism in India, 1924-1927* (Calcutta, 1928), p. 335.
9. *The Times of India*, 1918, Political and Secret Department, F. No. 4363/1920. Mahendra Pratap's idea was to organise an international Socialist army comprising German, Austrian, Bulgaria, Turkish and Russian socialists, who could easily cross Soviet Russia and help India to make herself free. But the idea was not accepted by Germany. See Mahendra Pratap, op. cit., p. 58.
10. Mahendra Pratap to Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 5 August 1918. German Foreign Office Records, Roll No. 400. N.A.I.

11. Weekly report D.C.I. 20 March 1920. Home Political Deposit, March 1920, No. 89. N.A.I.
12. During the war Abdul Jabbar and Abdul Sattar were in Constantinople and carried on a pan-Islamic propaganda there diametrically opposite to what the Indian revolutionaries were doing. They were encouraged in this both by the members of the German Embassy and the Turkish authorities. After the Russian Revolution, they went to Moscow and met Lenin in November 1918. See German Foreign Office Records, Roll No. 400 and Foreign Department, Frontier Secret, February 1920, Nos. 77-171. N.A.I.
13. Gill as the member of the Berlin Committee was suspected by the German Government of being a British spy and was arrested. While in jail, he made the acquaintance of Liebhnecht, founder of the German Communist Party. After release he came to know Karl Radek through Liebhnecht. From then onward he conceived the idea of introducing communism in India. He was amongst the earliest batch of Indian revolutionaries who worked in Propaganda School at Moscow. Report Special Bureau of Information, 9 October 1920.
14. "Report General Staff Branch on Bolshevik Propaganda for India 1919." Foreign Department, General, Confidential B. 1919, No. 14. N.A.I.
15. Weekly report D.C.I. 22 June 1918. Home Political B, June 1918, Nos. 491-94. N.A.I.
16. Foreign Department, Papers of the Special Bureau of Information, 1917, Nos. 1-14. N.A.I.
17. *ibid.*
18. *ibid.*
19. *ibid.*
20. Russian *Blue Book* on India. Foreign Department, Secret War, February 1920, Nos. 258-67. The introduction by K.M. Troionovsky was based on the propaganda material supplied to him by the Indian revolutionaries, especially on the pamphlet *Self Government* for India. Foreign Office, No. 371/3069/1917. P.R.O.
21. The selected telegrams and despatches in the *Blue Book* were written by M.M. Nabokov, Lisovsky and Tomanovsky, the Russian Consul-General in India from 1907 to 1917. *ibid.*
22. *ibid.* British Intelligence Department regarded Troionovsky as a "high priest of Bolshevism". Home Political Deposit, March 1920, No. 89. N.A.I.
23. Petrie, *op. cit.*, pp. 2, 6.
24. Note by Petrie on "India and the Russian Revolution." Foreign Office, No. 371/3434/1918. P.R.O.

25. See L.F. Rushbrook Williams, *Report of the Administration of Lord Chelmsford, 1916-21* (Calcutta, 1921), p. 26.
26. Harish Kapoor, *Soviet Russia and Asia, 1917-27* (Geneva, 1966), p. 38.
27. From Secretary of State to Viceroy, 26 September 1918. Chelmsford Papers. But two days later: S.O.S. informed that Zalhind was in Zurich and was therefore not likely to be in Simla S.O.S. to Viceroy 28 August 1918. *ibid.*
28. Report General Staff Branch, "Bolshevik Propaganda in India." Foreign Department", General Confidential B, 1919, No. N.A.I.
29. "Note on Bolshevism, Foreign Department, Secret Internal, August 1920, Nos. 8-26. N.A.I.
30. L.F. Rushbrook Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 3.
31. Note by Petrie on "India and the Russian Revolution", Foreign Office, No. 371/3424/1918. The Soviet Government repeatedly announced that it not only recognised the right of all large and small nationalities to determine their own fate but also recognised the independence of separate nationalities which previously formed part of the Tsarist Empire. Proclamation from the Commissary for Foreign Affairs, Foreign Department, Confidential B, External C, 1920, No. 174.
32. C.S. Samra, *India and the Anglo-Soviet Relations, 1919-1947* (Bombay, 1958), p. 33.
33. "The Disorders Inquiry Committee Report", Vol. VI. Home Political, F. No. 164/1/1923, K.W. I. N.A.I.
34. *ibid.*
35. D. Petrie, *op. cit.*, p. 318.
36. B.C. Bamford, *Histories of the Non-Cooperation and Khilafat Movements* (Delhi, 1925), p. 141.
37. Foreign Department, Secret Frontier, September 1919, Nos. 92-101. N.A.I.
38. "The Disorders Inquiry Committee", Vol. VI. Home Political, F. No. 164/1/1923, K.W. I. N.A.I.
39. "Papers Regarding Hostilities with Afghanistan, 1919", Cmd. 324 (London, 1919), p. 4.
40. "Leading Personalities in Afghanistan" L.P.O., 326. IOL.
41. M.K. Gandhi, *Young India, 1919-20* (Madras, 1924), p. 763.
42. C.S. Samra, *op. cit.*, p. 40. E.H. Carr holds that it is unlikely that anyone in Moscow was cognizant of the impending outbreak of hostilities between Britain and Afghanistan. See E.H. Carr, *The Bolshevik*

- Revolution*, Vol. III (London, 1961), p. 237.
43. Weekly report D.C.I. 25 August 1919. Home Political B, August 1919, Nos. 432-35. N.A.I
  44. Weekly report D.C.I. 15 September 1919. Home Political Deposit, September 1919, Nos. 454-57. N.A.I.
  45. *Izvestia*, 6 May 1919. Foreign Department, Secret Frontier, February 1920, Nos. 77-171. N.A I.
  46. "Turco-Bolshevik activities." Note by Political Intelligence Officer, 10 December 1920. Foreign Department, External B, June 1921, No. 216. N A.I.
  47. "Summary of Events, Afghanistan". Foreign Department, Frontier B, November 1920, Nos. 31-32. N.A.I.
  48. R.R. Maconochie "A Precipis on Afghan Affairs, 1919-1927" (Simla, 1928), p. 34.
  49. Report General Staff Branch, 14 October 1919. Foreign Department, External Confidential B, 1920, Nos. 521-83. N.A.I.
  50. "Bolshevik activities in Afghanistan". Foreign Department, F. No. 61-M/1924. N.A.I.
  51. *ibid*. The press duly started working in Tashkent and published its first Hindi paper the *Zamindar*. Political and Secret Department, Memoranda C. 203. I.O.L.
  52. Report General Staff Branch, 9 December 1919. Foreign Department, Confidential B, External C, 1920, Nos. 521-583. The same report quoting from *Tashkent News* gave the information about a meeting held on 24 November 1919 of the "Alliance for the Liberation of the East" which was attended by Afghan Consul and a number of Indian revolutionaries and the local communists. In the meeting there was the usual denunciation of the British and pledges of all present to fight to extinguish British rule in India, Egypt and elsewhere. *ibid*.
  53. According to a Russian writer "Bravine was assassinated shortly after his mission had informed King Amanullah that Soviet Government was ready to give any assistance in defence of her independence against British aggression". See I. Andronov, "Awakening East", *New Times*, March 1967.
  54. Anand Gupta (ed.), *India and Lenin* (New Delhi, 1960), pp. 32-34.
  55. Moscow to Tashkent, 25 July 1919. Political and Secret Department, F. No. 1229/1919, Part I. I.O.L.
  56. "Summary of Events, Afghanistan." Foreign Department, Frontier B, November 1920, Nos. 31-32. The General Staff Branch of the Government of India intercepted a number of pamphlets which were

- sent by Suritz for distribution amongst the troops and the frontier tribes. The intercepted pamphlets were : 1. Programme of the Communists (Bolsheviks); 2. The Old Order in Europe and New Order in Russia; 3. Will you be Oppressor of Workers' Liberty; 4. Capitalist England Vs. Socialist Russia; 5. The Constitution of Russian Socialist Federal Republic; 6. Civil War and Red Terror. Report General Staff Branch, 10 February 1920, Foreign Department, Confidential B, Ext. C, 1920, Nos. 521-583. N.A.I.
57. "Report Special Bureau of Information." Foreign Department, Confidential B, External C, 1920, Nos. 319-64. N.A.I.
  58. "Bolsheviks Designs on India", Political and Secret Memoranda B 355. I.O.L.
  59. Report Special Bureau of Information. Foreign Department, External C, Confidential, 1920, Nos. 319-64. N.A.I.
  60. The *Hijarat* movement started in May 1920 as a result of the *Fatwa* of the Ulemas that since the British Government was hostile to the Khalif it was uneasy for Muslims to live under their Government. The alternative being *Jihad* (holy war). The movement received encouragement when the Amir of Afghanistan issued a proclamation welcoming the emigrants and promising them grants of land. By the middle of August 1920, 20,500 *Muhajars* entered Afghanistan. The movement received a sudden check when on 12 August, the Amir issued orders amounting to practical prohibition of the *Muhajars* in Afghanistan. Less than a week after, the return movement started. However, some did not return and went to Turkey, others fell under the spell of Bolshevik propaganda and went to Tashkent. Foreign Department, F.No. 270-F/1923. For details about the trials and suffering of the *Muhajars*, Shaukat Usmani, *Peshawar to Moscow* (Banaras, 1927).
  61. "Bolshevik activity in India." Foreign Department, F No. 61-M/1924. N.A.I.
  62. "Bolshevik Intelligence Reports." Political and Secret Department, F.No. 201/1921. I.O.L.
  63. The Oriental Congress at Baku was to be held on 15 August, but was postponed on account of the delay in the coming of the delegates and was held on 1 September 1920. Political and Secret Memoranda C. 203.
  64. C.S. Samra, op. cit., p. 48.
  65. *The Dally Gazette* (Karachi), 24 November 1920. Foreign Department, F.No. 717-F/1923. N.A.I.
  66. The Seven Indians were : Syid Amir Badshah, Muhammad Ashar,



- Faqir Shah, Abdul Kadir, Nizam-ud-din. Muhammad Afsar and Ghulam Faruq. F. No. 270-F/1923. Statement of Abdul Rahim : The seven Indian delegates had gone to Baku after having differences with Abdul Rab at Tashkent.
67. "Note on Soviet Eastern Propaganda." Foreign Department, F.No. 437-M/1923. N.A.I.
  68. "Information Concerning Baku Conference." Political and Secret Deptt. Memo. C. 203. I.O.L.
  69. "Note on the foreign policy of Soviet Union", 25 February 1921. *ibid.*
  70. C.S. Samra, op. cit., p. 50.
  71. The Second World Congress of the Communist International was held at Moscow from 19 July to 7 August 1920. The Congress decided that in order to organise revolutions in Asia, it was necessary to convene the First Congress of the Eastern People which should meet at Baku and secondly to open a propaganda Centre at Tashkent. For details about the Second Congress, see the Proceedings of the Second Congress of the Communist International, Moscow, 1920 and M.N. Roy, *Memoirs*, pp. 389-91.
  72. Appendix I to Notes. Home Political, F.No. 261/1924. N.A.I.
  73. "Information Concerning Baku Conference." Political and Secret Memo. C. 203. I.O.L.
  74. Cecil Kaye, *Communism in India* (Calcutta, 1925), p. 4.
  75. M.N. Roy, *Memoirs* (Bombay, 1964), p. 420.
  76. "Statement of Abdul Rahim." Foreign Department, F.No. 270-F/1923. N.A.I.
  77. M. Persits, "Formation of the Indian Revolutionary Committee", *The Soviet Review*, Vol. XI, June 1974, pp. 21-24. The British sources are silent about this aspect of Roy's activities in Moscow.
  78. See "Information Concerning Baku Conference." Political and Secret Memoranda C. 203. I.O.L.
  79. "Statement of Abdul Rahim." Foreign Department, F.No. 270-F/1923. N.A.I.
  80. Political and Secret Memoranda C. 203. I.O.L.
  81. "Bolshevik Designs on India," Political and Secret Memoranda B. 355. I.O.L.
  82. R.R. Maconochie, op. cit., p. 49.
  83. Cecil Kaye, op. cit., p. 4.
  84. *ibid.*

85. Harish Kapoor, *op. cit.*, p. 233.
86. Zafar Imam, *Colonialism in East-West Relations : A study of Soviet Policy Towards India and Anglo-Soviet Relations 1917-1947* (New Delhi, 1969), p. 147. Even the Government of India had no faith in the rumours regarding Russian attack. See Foreign Department, Reports Special Bureau of Information 1920. N.A.I.
87. M. Persits, "First Organised Group of Indian Communists", *The Soviet Review*, Vol. XI, June 27, 1974, p. 156.
88. Cecil Kaye, *op. cit.*, p. 5.
89. Weekly report D.C.I. 20 March 1920. Home Political Deposit, March 1920, No. 89. N.A.I.
90. *ibid.*
91. Weekly report D.C.I. 20 June 1920. Home Political Deposit, July 1920, No. 13. N.A.I.
92. "Report Special Bureau of Information" No. 329/1920. N.A.I.
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94. Weekly report D.C.I. 6 December 1920. Home Political Deposit, December 1920, No. 87. N.A.I.
95. *ibid.*
96. India Office note on "Soviet Government and the Indian Revolutionaries." Political and Secret Department, F. No. 1229. I.O.L.
97. *ibid.*
98. *ibid.*
99. Cecil Kaye, *op. cit.*, p. 2.
100. India Office note on "Soviet Government and the Indian Revolutionaries," Political and Secret Department, F.No. 1229. I.O.L.
101. "Report Special Bureau of Information" 2 October 1920.
102. Cecil Kaye, *op. cit.*, p. 2.
103. D. Petrie, *op. cit.*, p. 7.
104. Weekly report D.C.I. 25 April 1921. Home Political Deposit, June 1921, No. 54. N.A.I.
105. Note on "Soviet Government and the Indian Revolutionaries" Political and Secret Department, F. No. 1229. I.O.L.

106. Weekly report D.C.I. 25 April 1921. Home Political Deposit, June 1921, No. 54. N.A.I.
107. Weekly report D.C.I. 9 May 1921. Home Political Deposit, June 1921, No. 55. N.A.I.
108. Political and Secret Memoranda C. 203. I.O.L.
109. *ibid.*
110. Cecil Kaye, op. cit., p. 3.
111. India Office note on "Soviet Government and the Indian Revolutionaries," Political and Secret Department, F.No. 1229. I.O.L.
112. Besides Chattopadhyaya the delegation consisted of Bhupendra Nath Datta, P.S. Khankhoje, B. Das Gupta, G.A.K. Luhani, Dr. Mansur, Dr Hafiz, H.L. Gupta, M. Barkatullah, M.P.T. Acharya, Abdul Wahid, Abdul Rab, Nalini Gupta, Agnes Smedley. *ibid.*
113. Cecil Kaye, op. cit., p. 5. Chattopadhyaya also mentions that Roy enjoyed "the confidence of the then leading comrades of the Comintern. We had to leave Moscow after four months without being able to convince the comrades about the real character of Roy and his people." See speech of Chattopadhyaya in G. Adhikari, (ed.), *Documents of the History of the Communist Party of India 1917-1922*, Vol. I (New Delhi, 1971), pp. 85-87.
114. Cecil Kaye, op. cit., p. 6.
115. In the preamble of this Agreement both the countries pledged "to refrain from hostile action or undertaking against the other and from conducting outside of its own borders any official propaganda direct or indirect against the institution of the British Empire or the Soviet Government respectively." The Soviet Government also agreed to desist from making any attempt by military or diplomatic or any other form of hostile action against British interest or British Empire especially in India and the independent State of Afghanistan." Foreign Department F. No. 188 (1)-M/1923. Immediately after the Trade Agreement, the Soviet Government notified to Zinoviev, then President of the Executive Committee of the Third International to "take over the propaganda for the whole of the East" and transferred the existing Government agents to his service. Political and Secret Department, F.No. 1229. Not only that Chicherin, the Soviet Foreign Minister, sent an assurance to the British Government in reply to their letter of protest note that everything on their part would be avoided which might weaken their mutual relations. Foreign Department, F.No. 188 (1)-M/1923. N.A.I.
116. Cecil Kaye, op. cit., p. 5.

117. *ibid.*, p. 6. The Indian revolutionaries after having come in contact with diverse ideologies then prevalent in the European countries had a firm belief that unless the British rule was abolished, any experiment in implanting political ideology in India was likely to be fruitless.
118. Quoted by Muzaffar Ahmad in *The Communist Party of India and its Formation Abroad* (Calcutta, 1961), pp. 127-28.

## Conclusion

The Indian revolutionary activities abroad slackened when the Soviet Government decided in favour of M.N. Roy and his group. Chattopadhyaya did try to revive the movement, but his efforts proved to be futile. On reaching Berlin, he started in December 1921 the "Indian News and Information Bureau" with a view to commence the anti-British propaganda on fresh lines. The last desperate attempt was made to reorganise the Indian National Revolutionary Committee in early 1922 when Chattopadhyaya wrote to Tarak Nath Das and S.N. Ghosh in US to Rash Behari Bose in Japan, to Barkatullah, M.P.T. Acharya, Dr Hafiz and Obedullah in Afghanistan urging them to join. The main object was to bring about a combination of all the Indian revolutionaries abroad and to set up a Central Organisation in Berlin in opposition to Roy.<sup>1</sup> In the absence of any understanding among diverse Indian revolutionary groups Chattopadhyaya's scheme fell through. Each group wanted to pursue its own objectives and they failed to emerge as a cohesive force working for a common cause. The favourable circumstances responsible for bringing together the various revolutionary groups during the war did not exist any longer. The failure of the earlier schemes on the one hand, and the ideological differences which became evident at the meeting in Moscow on the other led to the weakening of the movement. In India with the emergence of Gandhi on the political scene the national movement inside the country gained new vigour and importance.

The revolutionary movement abroad started by Shyamaji as anti-British and anti-Congress gained considerable strength under Savarkar's leadership and appeared to be ready to challenge the authority of the British. The terrorist methods followed by Savarkar and his co-workers were soon given up for a

more ambitious policy of forging an armed insurrection to overthrow the British rule in India. Concerted attempts were made to achieve this objective. The Indian immigrants on the Pacific Coast and Canada were organised into a well-knit organisation by the Indian revolutionaries from London and Paris. The Ghadr party, no doubt, began working on a modest scale, but within a short time it assumed considerable strength and its members were highly indoctrinated with a sense of patriotic duty and zeal to subvert the alien rule in India.

On the outbreak of the first World War, the Ghadr party with the help of the Indian revolutionary groups in India made an earnest attempt to overthrow the British Government by an armed rebellion. In this aim the Ghadr party also wanted to engage the assistance of every Indian and every sympathiser in every neutral country in the world. In the arena of Indian national movement the Ghadr party adopted for the first time an independent outlook. The party was more outspoken about its aims and objects than any other party in existence at that time. The party did not think that all those movements which the British were permitting to exist—such as the Congress or other moderate political parties, would confer any great benefit upon India. It was quite critical about the showy leaders of the Congress who in its view had destroyed the soul of the country. The party claimed to protect the independent soul or spirit of India. Though it could not develop a strong base in India, its workers were everywhere in the world and ready to blow the bugle of independence, distribute revolutionary newspapers and make preparations for a mutiny.<sup>2</sup>

On the other hand, the Indian revolutionary groups on the Continent joined hands with the German Government with the same object. They too failed to achieve the desired end. The failure was not due to the lack of patriotism or initiative, but because of faulty and weak planning coupled with poor coordination. Perhaps the fight was between two unequal forces. The task was not easy of accomplishment under the then prevailing circumstances, particularly when it is taken into consideration that the Indian revolutionaries were trying to achieve their objective by doing all the work in secret in India, or, if

openly, at a distance in Europe or US. With no previous training in the art of revolution and against superior vigilance of the British authorities, the attempt at revolt had few chances of success. According to Reginald Craddock the schemes of the Indian revolutionaries were potentially very dangerous, but they remained schemes because of the admirable work done—not only within India itself, but also in different parts of the world by the Criminal Investigation Department of the Government of India. Practically all the schemes of the Indian revolutionaries were known to the Government of India even before they were put into active operation.<sup>3</sup> Almost everywhere they had their agents working amongst the Indian revolutionary groups who gave them prior information about every one of their plans.

It may be considered idle now to apportion blame for the miscarriage of German plans for supply of arms and ammunition especially in a situation in which communication was extremely difficult, and the arms were to be sent from distant America. Not only that, even some of the Indians also proved to be traitors and became British Agents. The Indian revolutionary groups in the United States and on the Continent took into its fold whoever was available outside India and it is not at all surprising that some of them with no training could never think of their country above their personal interest. The Ghadr party had hardly had the time to organise their workers in Malaya, Singapore and other places when the war started. Not only that they could not establish any active contact with the revolutionaries in India while the “Congress at that time did not countenance any forward or extremist movement and was out and out a moderate organisation.”<sup>4</sup> A purely military revolt isolated from the mainstream of the people who seemed for all practical purposes to be loyal, was not likely to succeed, though it is on record that a number of regiments fell under the spell of Ghadr propaganda and at some places even revolted against the authorities.

The attitude of loyalty manifested during the war by the Indian public in general and their leaders in particular towards British rule also contributed to a large extent to the failure of the revolutionary movement. “The revolutionary

movement did not succeed to overthrow the British rule" wrote the Director, Criminal Intelligence, "because far-sighted constitutional leaders of India," believed that "the nation which has got into this world to protect small nations like Belgium and Serbia will certainly in proper time grant self-government to the people of India."<sup>5</sup>

Though the Indian revolutionaries failed to overthrow the British Government, the movement made a significant impact on Indian politics. The struggle of the Indian revolutionaries abroad forged a workable unity among men of different communities and castes which was largely lacking in India. The movement abroad proved that it could be carried on secular lines without the tinge of communal discords. The Government of India was not wrong in recognising this strange fact and the Home Member apprehended on the eve of the war that there was likely to be a coalition between the Sikhs and the Aryas, the Hindus and the Mohammadans because as foreigners in strange lands and coming from a common country they were likely to forget their caste or religious differences and would make a common cause to overthrow the British.<sup>6</sup>

It was through their writings and propaganda that they infused the spirit of revolution and unity amongst the people belonging to different castes and creeds in the foreign lands. The ceaseless propaganda by the *Indian Sociologist* from England and other places, the *Bande Matram* from Geneva, the *Talvar* from Berlin, the *Free Hindustan* from Vancouver, the *Ghadr* from America and the *Islamic Fraternity* from Japan carried the message of revolutionary nationalism for the people in and outside India. According to the Government's analysis the agitation in India during this period was largely fostered by the revolutionaries and the inflammatory literature which poured into the country from England, America and the continent of Europe.<sup>7</sup> They kindled and kept burning a flame that was later to make a revolutionary mass movement possible.

It was the force and power of this revolutionary propaganda and its impact on the Indian national movement that compelled the Government to win over the moderates to their side by giving them some concessions from time to time. Their policy had been to repress the most openly active revolutionaries and



at the same time to conciliate the lukewarm members of the party and the general public.<sup>8</sup> The Government of India could very well realise that it was well-nigh impossible for them to agree to the demand of complete independence of the revolutionaries. But the question before them was that they could not ignore the movement altogether and depend only on the moderates. On the eve of the Russian Revolution the Director, Criminal Intelligence sent a note of warning to the British Foreign Office after studying closely the activities of the Indian revolutionary forces. He specially mentioned that the events were moving in such a way that India was bound to obtain more political rights from Great Britain or the Indian people would snatch away their right of governing themselves<sup>9</sup> by revolutionary means. The Declaration of August 1917 and the subsequent constitutional Reforms of 1919 were to a large extent the outcome of these reports which were introduced to counterbalance the activities of the Indian revolutionaries.

No one can deny that it was the Indian revolutionary movement abroad that created an awareness of the political aspirations of the Indian people in the various countries of Europe, US and the Far East. Before the beginning of the revolutionary movement abroad, the French, Germans, Turkish, Japanese, Russians or Americans knew hardly anything about the political developments in India. It was the propaganda of the Indian revolutionaries in different countries which created interest among some foreign powers in the future of India. Savarkar's hazardous attempt to escape at Marsailles and the international issues it raised made the Indian revolutionary movement, "its hopes and ambitions the topic of discussions all over Europe". The enemies of England all over the world began to take the Indian revolutionaries seriously and opened negotiations with their leaders.<sup>10</sup> There is no denying the fact that this incident focussed the world's attention on India's problem. No other single act of an Indian had ever before or even afterwards been directly instrumental in bringing the case before the bar of world opinion.

During the war the anti-British propaganda carried on by the Indian revolutionaries with the support of Germany made India an international question. The Indian revolutionaries,

no doubt, gained considerable sympathy and support from the people in various countries, though the official response to their fight against Britain in France, the Netherland East Indies, Switzerland, Siam, even China, and the US to some extent, was far from encouraging. These countries were too willing to assist the British in crushing the legitimate activities of the Indian revolutionaries. But this does not mean that the Indian revolutionaries had no supporters. During the war Germany gave her support to the Indian revolutionaries for the overthrow of the British rule. Other countries like Turkey, Afghanistan, Austria, Hungary, Russia (after the Russian Revolution) and even Japan despite her limitations under the Anglo-Japanese alliance extended their sympathy to the Indians in their fight against British imperialism. By the end of the war the question of freedom for India gained more sympathisers and supporters in Soviet Russia, US and Japan. In fact Indian revolutionaries rendered a yeoman's service to the cause of India's freedom by exposing the true nature of British rule and by counteracting false British propaganda regarding India in US and other countries of the world. Gradually the American people grew more and more sympathetic towards Indian aspirations for independence. Countless Americans of Irish Teutonic and other non-British European lineage were appreciative of the demands of the Indian people.

The alliance of the Indian revolutionaries with Germany during the war has often come in for adverse criticism and they have been branded as mere stooges and tools of German Imperialism.<sup>11</sup> Roy himself a revolutionary called them "dupes of German intrigues", but admitted that "it was not a mean achievement on their part to have acquired in Berlin the status of the representatives of a belligerent power, so as to enlist the support of the German Government for India's struggle against British imperialism."<sup>12</sup> The Indian revolutionaries fought with Germany to achieve the common objective, but they never fought for her. They were as much against German Imperialism as against British Imperialism. There is no evidence available either in the German Foreign Office or in the British archives to show that the Indian revolutionaries ever wished to substitute German Imperialism

for British despotism. On the eve of the war Germany was anxious to exploit all anti-British feelings to her own advantage. The Indians on their part wanted to take advantage of the international situation for their own nationalists purposes and had no intention of allowing themselves to be exploited purely for Germany's sake.<sup>13</sup> They believed like the Irish revolutionaries that India could never achieve freedom without the active support of a third-power. Therefore on the outbreak of the war, they entered into an alliance with Germany and offered her their support in return for a promise to free India in the event of her being victorious in her war with England. The alliance as explained by H.L. Gupta was purely a matter of expediency.<sup>14</sup>

For four years the Indian revolutionaries carried on their fight with the help of Germany and in spite of "many points of tension" between them, the German Government officially recognised the Indian Independence Committee and "its representatives were treated almost on the footing of Foreign Ambassadors."<sup>15</sup> Chattopadhyaya as President of the Indian Independence Committee and as the leader of the Indian revolutionaries had very cordial relations with the German Government. He never lowered the national dignity or his self-respect as a representative of India. He associated with the German Foreign Office as an Ambassador and an ally rendering mutual assistance during the war.<sup>16</sup> They were sincere and loyal friends in the war against England and not the paid spies of the German Government.<sup>17</sup> When they threw in their lot with Germany, the Government's report mentions, their propaganda, no doubt, became pro-German in character, but it remained anti-British first and last, and even though largely paid for by Germany, it remained Indian in its direction and control.<sup>18</sup>

Besides Germany the Indian revolutionaries made attempts to get help from the Soviet Government but because of the ideological differences they could not succeed, and thus departed from Moscow. In spite of these differences, many Indian revolutionaries fell under the spell of the Bolshevik ideology and joined hands with Soviet Russia which naturally introduced a new element in the Indian national movement. The emphasis on class struggle which gained importance after 1920 was due

to the links with the Soviet Union. Recently, a Russian writer has opined that the fact that these Indian revolutionaries lived in the land of the Soviets for some time was of great importance for the emergence and development of the communist movement in India. Having failed in achieving their goal through revolution, they turned to Marxism in search of an answer to the question as to how to carry on an effective struggle for the liberation of their homeland.<sup>19</sup> After having come under the Bolshevik influence, they started propaganda on what they called a peasant and proletarian revolution as the bases of the Indian struggle for independence. The experience of Russian Revolution strengthened in them a conviction for socialism.<sup>20</sup>

But perhaps the most tangible contribution of the Indian revolutionaries was that they raised the banner of armed revolt for independence at a time when our foremost leaders could not think beyond "Home Rule". Opinions may differ as they have always differed regarding the methods of the Indian revolutionaries for achieving freedom, but it may safely be said to their credit that the activities of the Indian revolutionaries before the emergence of Gandhi form a significant phase of India's struggle for freedom. Harassed and haunted, the Indian revolutionaries followed their lonely trail. Many spent a life time as political exiles outside their motherland. They died unwept, unsung and far away from the land of their birth. It is a well-known fact that no plot or conspiracy can succeed if the public environment is apathetic or hostile to the conspirators. They might not have been able to convert the majority of the Indians to their views, but the spirit of disloyalty towards the British rule which became apparent after the war was, no doubt, due to the revolutionary movement. This was more so amongst Indians who were living outside the country and in a greater freedom. Writing about the Indians in the Far East, Petrie commented that it "is a melancholy fact that the Indian community in the East, taken as a whole is completely honeycombed with disloyalty. In the greater freedom from restraint under which Indians live in the Far East, the process of deterioration has been more rabid and more general". This was the major achievement of the Indian revolutionary movement abroad.<sup>21</sup>

Even in India, the movement was never static; on the contrary it continued to widen its sphere of influence and to swell the number of its adherents. And in both these respects it succeeded in making a considerable headway to the extent that there was a steady increase in numbers both of active revolutionaries, and still more of revolutionary minded people who might not themselves care to resort to violence, but who favoured its use in the fight against British domination. After the war, the revolutionary movement both in India and abroad, no doubt slackened, but it again emerged with renewed vigour after 1923 and posed in the opinion of the Director of Criminal Intelligence a more formidable menace to the British authority than at any previous period,<sup>22</sup> since their demand for political independence was now treated as a means to promote social revolution, the emancipation of workers and peasants.

Nobody can deny that the task of freeing India which the Indians from abroad tried to achieve was too colossal for their comparatively small organisation and meagre resources and the odds against them were too formidable to be overcome. Yet with all the defects in their working, none can fail to discern intrinsic faith in the idealism that inspired and led the Indian revolutionaries through a chain of dangers and disasters which beset them on all sides of the front.

### References

1. Cecil Kaye, op. cit., pp 14-15.
2. For details about the aims and objects of the Ghadr party, see *The Hindustan Ghadr*, 4 April 1915.
3. Sir Reginald Craddock, *The Dilemma in India* (London, 1929), p. 158. Lord Sydenham regarded it as the greatest conspiracy since the mutiny. Lord Sydenham, *Studies of an Imperialist* (London, 1928), p. 261.
4. Satya Pal and Prabodh Chandra, *Sixty Years of the Congress* (Lahore, 1946 , pp. 263-64.

5. Petrie note on "Indian and the Russian revolution." Foreign Office 371/3424/1918. P.R.O.
6. Note by R.H. Craddock, dated 14 July 1914. Home Political Deposit, July 1914, No. 34. N.A.I.
7. *Summary of Administration of Earl of Minto in the Home Department* (Calcutta, 1910).
8. Note D.C.I. 4 February 1916. Home Political A, May 1916, No. 172. N.A.I.
9. Petrie Note on "India and the Russian revolution." Foreign Office 371/3424/1918. P.R.O.
10. V.D. Savarkar, *The Story of My Transportation for Life* (Bombay, 1950), pp. 336-37.
11. Horst Kruger, "Germany and early Indian Revolutionaries", *Mainstream*, January 25, 1964.
12. M.N. Roy, *Memoirs* (Bombay, 1964), p. 90.
13. J.L. Nehru, *An Autobiography* (London, 1936), p. 152.
14. Report D.C.I. 2 June 1917. Home Political B, June 1917, Nos. 438-41. N.A.I.
15. Nehru, *op. cit.*, p. 152.
16. C. Chakravarty, *New India* (Calcutta, 1948), pp. 25-26.
17. See the protest note of the Berlin Committee. German Foreign Office Records, Roll No. 399.
18. War Office Memorandum on German Literary propaganda as regards India and the Orient. Home Political Deposit, December 1916, No. 30. N.A.I.
19. M. Persits, *op. cit.*, p. 31.
20. For further details about the subsequent activities of the Indian revolutionaries on these lines see Author's monograph on—*Russian Revolution and India 1922-29* (Sterling, 1978).
21. "Petrie's report on Indian sedition in the Far East". 1917. Foreign Department, Conf. B, Ext. 1918, No. 21. N.A.I.
22. Minute by D. Petrie. Home Political, F.No. 133/1930. N.A.I.



# Appendices

## APPENDIX I

### Thean Indi Home Rule Society

(Founded in February 1905)

#### President

**Shyamaji Krishna Varma, Esq., M.A. (Oxon), Barrister-at-Law**

#### Vice-President

**C. Muthu, Esq., M.D., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., (Lond.)**

**J.M. Parikh, Esq., Barrister-at-Law.**

**Dr D.E. Pereira, L.R.C.P. & S.**

**E. Delgado, Esq., M.A. (Oxon), Barrister-at-Law.**

**Parmeshwar Lall, Esq., M.A.**

**Dr U.K. Dutt, B.Sc., (Lond.), D.P.H. (Cantab), M.R.C.S. (Eng.)**

**Sardarsinghji R. Rana, Esq., B.A., Barrister-at-Law.**

**Manchershah Barjorji Goderej, Esq., B.A.**

**Abdullah Al-Mamun Suhrawardy, Esq., M.A.**

#### Honorary Secretary

**J.C. Mukerji, Esq.**

#### RULES

##### I—Name

**That this Society be called the Indian Home Rule Society.**

##### II—Objects

**That the objects of this Society be :**

- 1. To secure Home Rule for India.**



2. To carry on a propaganda in the United Kingdom by all practicable means with a view to attain the same.
3. To spread among the people of India a knowledge of the advantage of freedom and national unity.

#### III—Executive

1. That the officers of the Society consist of a President, Vice-President, Council, Treasurer, Secretaries, and Auditors.
2. That the Government of the Society be vested in a Council consisting of a President, Vice-Presidents, and Secretary (by virtue of their respective offices), of five members who shall be elected annually at a General Meeting, and of a duly-appointed representative from each branch of the Society which may hereafter be formed.
3. That the Council have power to appoint a Treasurer and Secretary or Secretaries from amongst its own members; to elect a President and Vice-Presidents, subject to the approval of the next General Meeting; to fill up vacancies in its own ranks, and to make the necessary bye-laws for carrying out these laws, and for the general management of the Society.
4. That all candidates for election as officers shall be nominated one month before the annual general meeting, and that such nomination shall be publicly announced, the form and manner to be determined by the Council.

#### IV—Membership

1. That the Membership of the Society be restricted to Indian gentlemen only, who shall apply on a form provided by the Society, and who shall be nominated by two existing members of the Society, and approved by the Council.
2. That each member shall pay an annual subscription of three shillings or Rupees 2-4-0, which shall entitle the member to receive *The Indian Sociologist* post

free, under a special arrangement made by the Council with the proprietor of that journal.

#### V—General Meetings

1. That a General Meeting be held once a year, at such place and time as the Council shall determine, at which meeting the presentation of the report and balance-sheet and the election of officers shall take precedence over all other business.
2. That, on the receipt of a requisition signed by not less than twenty-five members, a Special General Meeting be, within one month, called by the Council. No other business but that set forth on the notice calling the meeting shall be taken into consideration.
3. That the voting at all meetings be taken by show of hands, except when a poll is demanded, when the voting shall be taken by ballot. In the case of an equality of votes, the President shall, both on show of hands, and at a poll or ballot (if any) have a casting or second vote, in addition to his own.

#### VI—Expulsion

That the Council have power to expel any member, but the member so expelled shall have a right of appeal to the Annual General Meeting, or to a Special General Meeting called for that purpose.

#### VII—Alteration of Rule

That no alteration be made in these Rules except at an Annual General Meeting, by the vote of two-thirds of those present, two months' notice of the proposed alteration having been given to the Council.

## APPENDIX II

### Statement of Madan Lal Dhingra

I attempted to shed English blood intentionally and of purpose, as an humble protest against the inhuman transportation and hangings of Indian youth.

In this attempt I consulted none but my own conscience; conspired with none but my own duty.

I believe that a nation unwillingly held down by foreign bayonets is in a perpetual state of war. Since open battle is rendered impossible I attacked by surprise—since cannon could not be had I drew forth and fired a revolver.

As a Hindu I feel that the slavery of my nation is an insult to my God. Her cause is the cause of freedom. Her service is the service of Sri Krishna. Neither rich nor able, a poor son like myself can offer nothing but his blood on the altar of Mother's deliverance and so I rejoice at the prospect of my martyrdom.

The only lesson required in India is to learn how to die and the only way to teach it is by dying alone.

The soul is immortal and if everyone of my countrymen takes at least two lives of Englishmen before his body falls the Mother's salvation is a day's work.

This war ceases not only with the independence of India alone, it shall continue as long as the English and Hindu races exist in this world.

Until our country is free Sri Krishna stands exhorting 'if killed you attain Heaven; if successful you win the earth'.

It is my fervent prayer. "May I be reborn of the same mother and may I redie in the same sacred cause till my mission is done and she stands free for the good of humanity and to the glory of God."

### APPENDIX III\*

	Number of accused before the Court	Prosecu- tion Wit- nesses	Defence Witness- es	Duration of Trial
A. Lahore Conspiracy Case	61	404	228	26 April to Sep. 1915
B. 1st Lahore Supplementary Case	74	365	1042	29 Oct. 1915 to Mar. 1916
C. 2nd Lahore Supplementary Case	14	17	101	—
D. Walla Bridge Murder Case	5	—	—	—
E. Padri Murder Case	12	86	44	15 Jan. 1916 to Mar. 1916
F. Chand Singh's Murder Case	2	—	—	—
G. Mandi Conspiracy Case	5	31	18	15 to 22 Jan. 1917
H. 3rd Lahore Supplementary Case	1	46	—	19 Feb. to 2 Mar. 1917
I. 4th Lahore Supplementary Case	1	68	—	21 to 26 May 1917

\*Home Political B, July, 1918, Nos. 292-316. K.W.I.

### APPENDIX III—A

The general result of these trials was as follows :

Sentence	Death	Transportation for Life	Imprisonment	Acquit- ted	Hanged
A.	24	27	6	4	7
B.	6	45	8	15	5
C.	6	5	—	—	5
D.	5	5	—	5	5
E.	2	5	—	—	2
F.	2	—	4	—	
G.	—	1	—	—	
H.	1	—	—	—	1
I.	1	—	—	—	

Home Political B, July 1918, Nos. 292-316. K.W.I.

## APPENDIX IV

### **A Manifesto of the Indian National Party\***

We, the members of the Indian National Party bring to the notice of the world at large the cruelties which Great Britain has been perpetrating in India, for more than a hundred years. As a result of the British despotism, the Indian nation is absolutely impoverished. Since the occupation of India by the British, famines and plagues have become permanent in that country. More than nineteen millions died of famine in India in ten years of British occupation, while five millions died in all the wars of the world in one hundred and seven years. The draining of Indian national wealth by British robbery and extortion is terrible and unparalleled in history. The people of India suffer from unjust and heavy taxation levied by the rapacious usurpers of the land. They have destroyed the ancient industries of India and systematically hamper all national enterprises. Thus, Great Britain stands self-condemned for the unspeakable poverty and stagnation of the millions of the people of Hindustan.

The British power is based on perfidy, treachery, brutality and brigandage. Remember the massacre of the Egyptian Fel-laheen soldiers on the field of Tel-el-Kebir, the cold-blooded and wholesale slaughter of the Soudanese at Omdurman, the butchery of the Tibetans on the road to Lhasa, the Denshawai hangings in Egypt, the massacre of poor Peruvians in Putumayo, the shooting down of Hindustanee labourers in British Guiana, whose poverty engendered by British oppression, had driven them to work in exile for British exploiters in a foreign land, the hanging of Indian women and the blowing off of Indian patriots from the mouth of canons during the Indian War of Independence of 1857, the hanging and imprisonment of Indian patriots, the Cawnpore killings, cruelty to the Indian political prisoners in the jails and the Andaman islands, the violation of Indian

women, the practising of indentured slavery in the tea-plantations in India, the horrors of the Boer concentration camps, and many more infamous acts, then you will learn to judge of the truth of the British 'Justice and fairplay' !

The Britishers have been violating the treaties and solemn pledges given to the princes and the people of India. They arrest patriots without accusation and deport them without trial, outrage the right of asylum, and deny political prisoners the right of defence by counsel, suborn perjured witnesses, and defend the torture of the innocent people by their police, put down public meetings, and suppress freedom of the press. All the infamies, which they denounce when committed by other countries, are being perpetrated by them in Hindustan. And these are the people who pretend to support the rights of the Belgians, and trumpet to the world to be the upholders of "liberty and civilisation" !

We, the members of the Indian National Party, declare, that the action of the British in India is unjust and inhuman. We strongly protest against the inhumanities being perpetrated on the Indian patriots who are fighting for national freedom. We protest against the selfish action of the British in forcibly bringing the Indian soldiers to be murdered on the battlefields of Europe and elsewhere.

At present, India is in a state of war with England and guerrilla warfare is being waged by the nationalists to emancipate themselves from the hated British yoke. We declare those Indians who are helping the enemy traitors to the cause of our Fatherland.

We ask the world in the name of justice, what right England has to put down the Indian patriots, while she pretends to uphold the cause of "liberty" in Europe ! We, the Indian nationalists, declare that we have a right to fight for freedom, and we will not stop till India is free.

We, the Indian nationalists, appeal to the world at large in the name of humanity and justice, and ask whose claim is more reasonable, of the Indians or of the Britishers in India ?

We denounce the British domination in India, which is extremely prejudicial to Indian interests and against all laws of humanity. Whatever brutal proceedings Great Britain may

**take against the just aspirations of Hindustan, the Indian movement for independence shall not be suppressed till India is free from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin.**

**The Executive Committee  
of  
The Indian National Party**



## APPENDIX V

### Copy of a letter from Bethmann Hollwag to Indian Rajas and Nawabs

To your Serene Highness I have the honour hereby to present the greetings of the Imperial Government and to convey the expression of the friendly feelings which the German Empire has always cherished towards India and its Princes. Ever since the English established their foreign rule in India, they have done their best to shut the Indian Princes and the Indian people off from any contact with the non-English outside world. On the other hand Germany, in scrupulous regard for the recognised rules of international intercourse, has made no sort of attempt to enter into direct relations with the Indian rulers. The war, wantonly brought on by England and her allies Russia and France, which to the triple alliance has already brought such heavy losses, but the Germany, Austria-Hungary and Turkey incomparable successes, has released Germany from the duty of reserve always minutely observed by her, and gives her the opportunity of expressing to the Indian Rulers and peoples her warmest sympathy in their struggle against British oppression and arrogance.

Seeing that Your Serene Highness's reputation as one of the most enlightened Princes and as one of the most enthusiastic in the cause of the Fatherland, has penetrated even as far as this, I take the liberty of addressing this note to Your Highness confident that Your Serene Highness will do everything to further the cause of India. As the English world empire must at this moment devote all its powers to meeting the dangers which threaten it in Europe, Asia and Africa, and as the final liberation of Egypt and of Persia from the English and Russian yoke is imminent, I am persuaded that Your Serene Highness will use every endeavour to set India free also and to secure for her as an independent empire that place in the council of nations

which is her due. In these your endeavours Your Serene Highness will find the most energetic support in the Imperial Government and its exalted allies. Germany, Austria-Hungary and the Turkish Empire employ their military and economic forces with a view to bringing the war to a happy end not only for themselves but also for all others who join them. This war must be carried on until it is made impossible for England as hitherto to take the best from the people under her yoke and exploit them for her own purposes. Contrary to the slanders for years disseminated by our enemies Germany has never attempted to extend her dominion anywhere in the East. In accordance with her history, her tradition, her external situation and internal constitution she cannot do otherwise than welcome all efforts which may lead to the liberation of the ancient civilised nations of the East. True to these principles Germany and her allies have no thought of mixing in any way in the future internal constitution of free India. On the contrary, Germany, Austria, Hungary and the Turkish Empire will recognise this future Indian Empire as having equal rights, and will cultivate the friendliest relations with her in politics, economic and culture.

Conscious of the unity of our interests I salute Your Serene Highness as a partner in the struggle against the English world power.<sup>8</sup>

1. Chelmsford Papers, *I.O.L.*

## APPENDIX VI

### **Declaration on behalf of the Provisional Government of India to the Indian rulers and ryots**

At the time of the outbreak of this world-war on the 1st of August 1914 we were convinced that this struggle was to release the oppressed, helpless and trampled nations from the clutches of heartless, plundering and cruel England, Russia and France. Accordingly we at once started for Berlin and then went to Constantinople. At these places we obtained a written agreement from the German and Turkish Governments to the effect that if the Indians would rise up and expel the English from India those two powers in conjunction with their allies, Austria-Hungary and Bulgaria, would recognise them at once as *belligerents* and not as rebels. Further that if possible they would assist them with men and material and that if they succeeded in turning the English out of India and in establishing a stable Government in their country they would not only themselves recognise their Government but would get it approved by other powers at the time of general peace. At the same time the Turkish and German governments have given out in clear terms that they have no desire to establish their own rule in India but simply want to liberate her.

*The Provisional Government of India* has in its possession such complete documents as would furnish clear proof of the aforesaid conditions and would be published at their proper time. Our Indian brethren must understand that the attainment of these privileges costs nations ages of warfare and, loss of life and property, but it is due to nothing but her good luck that India has already secured them. Secondly, if the present opportunity which is afforded to India today is once lost it cannot be expected again for a thousand years. Thirdly, the English have become extremely exhausted by two years' fighting and even the slightest effort would suffice to overthrow them.

Fourthly, the Irish revolt has already shown that the downfall of the British is near at hand and none can stop it. Fifthly, now the tyranny of the English has reached its zenith and the hour of the tyrant's fall has struck. Ponder a little and you will find how many promising youths were hanged by the English this year, how many were transported to the penal settlement and how many were sent to prison for life? Sixthly, how did the English maltreat your Sikh brethren in Canada and with what cruelty the heroes of the *Komagata Maru* were murdered and how the *Ghadr* sepoys who came from America to fight for you have been put to trouble. This proves that the English are our enemies and can never be our friends.

The Provisional Government has arranged to make a properly organised attack on the English and that attack will soon take place. All the people of Hindustan should be on the look out for this attack and when it takes place they must arrange to kill the English and drive them out of India. Oh! Nawabs and Rajas of India, the time has come for you to wipe the stain of servitude from your foreheads and become free and fit to be called human beings. Don't wait for the impending attack, be free now and arrange to set up a free Government. Combine to devise your plans for war so that when the time comes you will not be found wanting. Oh! Indian sepoys, in spite of the fact that your prowess and perseverance and your steadfastness and gallantry in battle are known to the whole world, yet you are looked upon as wild beasts because you are at the bidding of the impure English who are desolating your dear country and ruining your fellow-countrymen. This crime and sin will blacken your faces both in this world and in the next. The time has now come for you to wipe away with your own hands the dark stain on your forehead. When the attack on the English comes kill your English officers, join the army of liberation and help them to kill the English. To free Mother India and your Indian brothers follow the example of the soldiers of Bosnia Herzegovina, Dalmatia of Russian and Serbian stock. When Austria sent them to fight the Russians and the Serbians they deserted to their Russian and Serbian brethren with their arms.

Oh! Indian Police constables, you are the eyes, ears, hands

and feet of the English, who are robbers and aliens. It is through you that they learn the innermost secrets of your Indian brethren and get the most complete information though they neither know your language nor care to meet you. It is through you that they hang hundreds of respectable young Indians, transport thousands of them and entomb lakhs of them in fetters in jails. There are no worse sinners than you in the world. For the sake of foreigners you dishonour your own kith and kin, plunder their wealth and ruin their lives. Come to your senses and realise that the time has come to punish the English for their oppression, cruelty, falsehood and treachery. If you will render assistance in releasing Mother India from the clutches of these transgressors you will obtain the absolution of your sins. All that is required of you is to allow the liberators of their country to work unhindered and when the fighting begins keep them informed of the movements of the British troops. Nowadays you fight like dogs over the bone thrown amongst you by the English, but tomorrow you will become masters of your own land. The wealth and riches of India are so vast that they will suffice for the necessities and luxuries of life of all persons. By the imposition of heavy taxes on the land, by the suppression of arts and industries, by means of laws, by monopolisation of commerce and trade by themselves and by reserving all high civil and military posts for their fellow-countrymen, the English have created in India ever present famine, cholera and plague. In some years starvation and plague carry away more lives from India than have been lost during the last two years' world-war. The English have purposely spread these calamities in India and the hour has arrived for you to free yourselves from this misfortune and take matters into your own hands.

Oh! dear children of India, Hindus, Muhammadans, Jains, Parsis and native Christians—the Provisional Government of India looks upon you with love and wishes to turn the marauding English out of India. All the races and religions of India should live together like brethren, they should encourage arts

and sciences, turn the whole human race into one family by promoting civilisation to the highest degree and turn the face of the earth into heaven and make it a fit abode for the pious.

## APPENDIX VII

**True duplicate of the letter given to Herr  
Von Hentig for delivery**

**BAGH-I-BABAR SHAH KABUL,  
19th May 1916.**

**Your Excellency,**

I reached Kabul on the 2nd of October 1915 as I informed you in one of the letters written from Kabul. Since then I am doing my best to perform my duty but very unfortunate hindrances have not allowed to accomplish much. Still the hope of future and the sense of duty keeps me at helm. No doubt the slow ways of the people and the Government came in my way but the greatest difficulty proved that I had practically not a single farthing to start the work. I hoped that if only proper start was made I could have got my own means. Now my only request is that please send at least twenty thousand troops for purely Indian work and the chief commander should have clear instructions to cooperate with me and help me and not to oppose me. When Your Excellency has once left the Indian work to me I feel sure that at least up to the time that the perfect freedom of India is achieved I shall receive every help from your August Government. I am glad to add that Moulvie Barkatulla has proved invaluable to me. You may also be glad to know that I am on very friendly terms with the Afghan Government as a whole and also with every individual member and I am heartily thankful for the great regard they have for me. Every high personage says that if sufficient German Turkish help in army arrives, Afghanistan will at once join and I have not the least doubt about this statement. I think if the war is sufficiently long and if you really desire to crush your bitterest enemy—the English—there can be no better step than to send sufficiently large force to India and Afghanistan. In the

**meantime, however, everything will be done by me in the holy cause. With hope to see something grand achieved.**

**I am Your Excellency's friend,  
(Sd.) M. PRATAP**

**To**

**The Right Hon'ble H.E.  
the Chancellor of the German Empire.**



APPENDIX VIII  
Summary of the Criminal Cases Arising out of the Ghadr Movement

Case	Tried	Acquitted	Hanged	Transported for life	Awarded lesser sentences
Lahore Conspiracy Case	61	4	7	34	16
Lahore Supplementary Conspiracy Case	74	15	5	18	36
Lahore 2nd	17	5	5	3	4
Lahore 3rd	1	—	1	—	—
Lahore 4th	1	—	1	—	—
Lahore City Conspiracy Case	5	—	—	1	4
Mandi Conspiracy Cases	6	—	—	2	4
Burma Conspiracy Case	17	4	6	5	2
Second -do-	4	—	1	3	—
Ferozeshahr Murder Case	8	—	8	—	—
Anarkali	1	—	1	—	—
Jagatpur	2	—	2	—	—
Nangal Kalan	2	—	2	—	—
Padari	12	5	2	—	—
Walla Bridge	5	—	2	3	2
Alawalpur (Jullundur) Dacoity Case	8	3	5	—	—
Gurdaspur Arms Act and Dacoity Cases	16	—	—	—	5
Chicago Conspiracy Case, United States of America	4	—	—	—	16
San Francisco	35	1	—	—	4
—do—	279	37	46	69	32
Total					125

## APPENDIX IX

**The following Ghadarities were awarded punishments in the San Francisco Case as indicated against each\***

No.	Name	Sentence
1.	Gopal Singh	One year and one day
2.	Bhai Bhagwan Singh	18 months
3.	Tarakanath Dass	22 months
4.	Gobind Bihari Lal	10 months
5.	Bihshan Bihari Hindi	9 months
6.	Bhai Santokh Singh	21 months
7.	Godha Ram	11 months
8.	Niranjan Dass	6 months
9.	Mahadeo Abaji Nandekar	3 months
10.	Munshi Ram	60 days
11.	Nidhan Singh	4 months
12.	Imam Din	4 months
13.	Dharindra Sarkar	4 months
14.	Chandar Kanta Chakravarti	30 days and \$5,000 fine
15.	Sunder Singh	3 months

\* Home Political A. November 1918, Nos. 142-163.



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